

**J**ESUS *the* JEW  
AND OTHER ADDRESSES

By HARRIS WEINSTOCK

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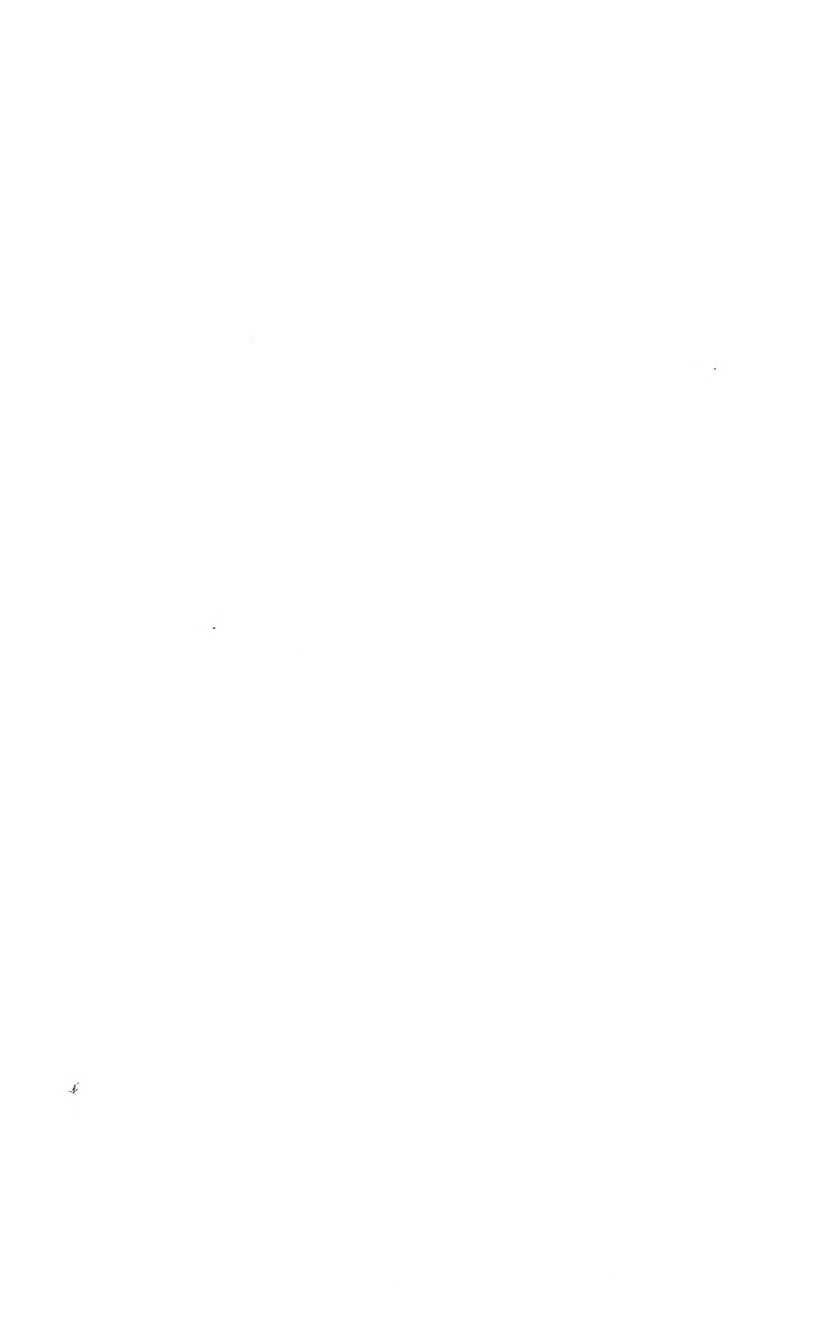
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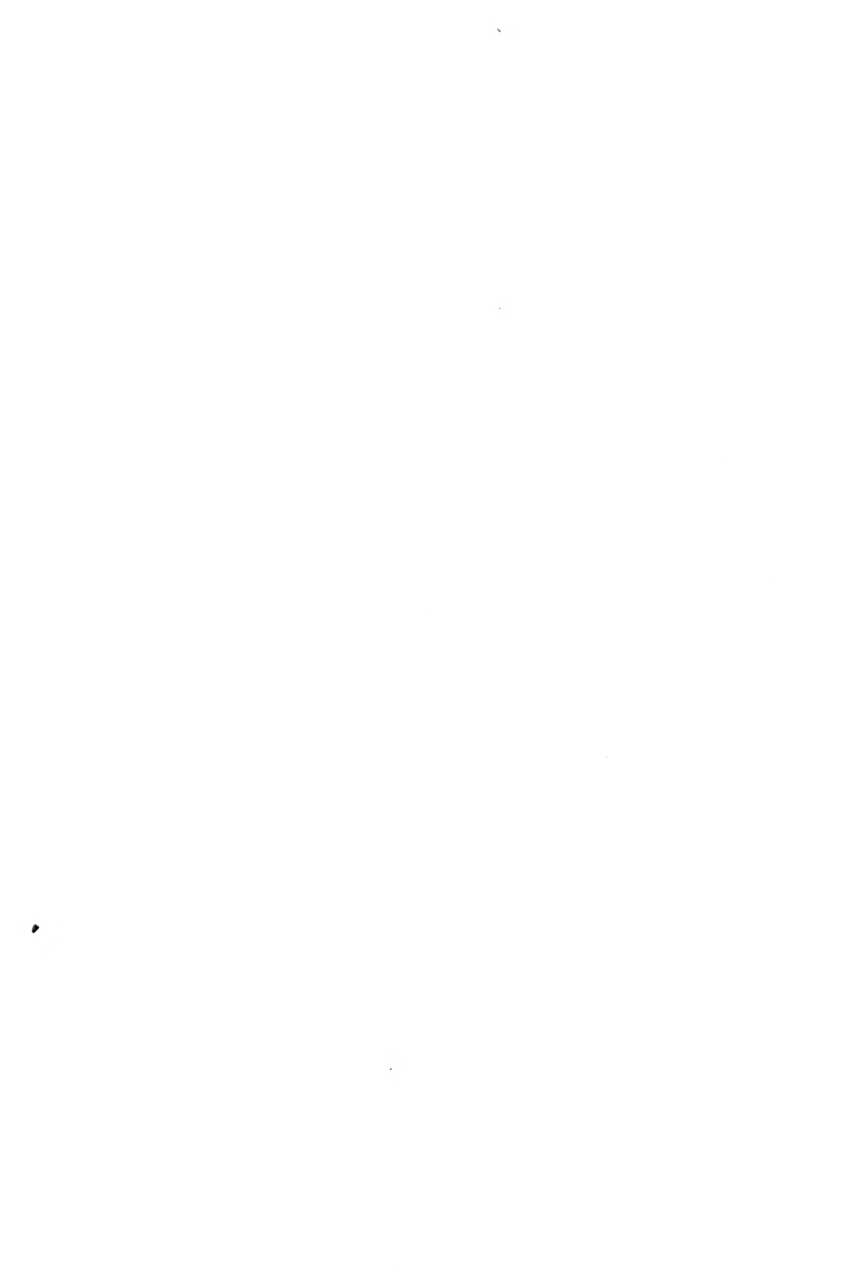
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Jesus the Jew





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*By*

HARRIS WEINSTOCK



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**To**  
**MY WIFE**



## INTRODUCTION

“What is the modern Jewish idea of Jesus?” “Do the Jews look forward to the coming of a Messiah?” “Do they continue to look upon themselves as God’s chosen people?” “Does the modern Jew approve of intermarriage?” These and similar questions have been asked of the author by non-Jews who were seeking enlightenment on these subjects.

In the following chapters the author has endeavored to answer these and kindred queries as a Jewish liberal.

The widespread attention which some of these addresses, when delivered from the platform, have commanded from Jew and non-Jew, and the continual demand for printed copies, have prompted the publication of this volume.

These addresses are designed, not especially for the theologian, nor for the layman; not for the churchd, nor for the unchurchd; not for the Christian, nor for the Jew; but for all

## Introduction

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who are earnestly interested in these inquiries. An effort has been made to be as explicit and simple as possible, tho at the risk of occasional repetitions.

Never before was the interest in the Jew and Judaism so pronounced and so universal as it is to-day. The wonderful story of the Jewish race and the Jewish faith is commanding the attention of the most thoughtful people the world over. If the views set forth in the following pages will in some way stimulate thought on the subjects therein presented and help correct some of the mistaken notions which, despite our enlightened era, may yet cling to Jew and Christian concerning each other, the author of this volume, who is a most worthy representative of the Jewish people in America, will feel well rewarded for whatever labors he may have expended.

DAVID STARR JORDAN.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY, CALIFORNIA,  
May 15, 1902.

## Jesus the Jew



# I

## JESUS THE JEW

As I look back into my early boyhood days, the picture is vividly brought to my mind of the old rabbi under whose instructions I received my religious training.

Tho thirty-odd years have since passed, I distinctly recall him as he sat at the head of the table, surrounded by Jewish lads between the ages of seven and thirteen, his long flowing locks and white beard giving him the air of one of the Biblical patriarchs.

I recall how innocent he was of all worldly knowledge, with what contempt he looked upon secular instruction, and how to him the sum of all human wisdom was confined to the Torah and the Talmud. The greatest savant or philosopher, if unable to read Hebrew, was to him an ignoramus. All truths, all knowledge worth having had in his opinion been uttered by the Hebrew prophets and the great Jewish Talmudists and commentators. To look else-

where for wisdom or knowledge seemed to him a waste of time and energy, and showed a lack of appreciation of Jewish thought and Jewish literature.

Joshua commands that "The words of this Torah shall not cease from thy mouth, and thou shalt meditate thereon day and night." To my old and pious religious teacher this injunction left no room for the study of anything but Jewish lore.

I recall that upon one occasion, one of the pupils by some chance brought into the religious school a book containing the name of Jesus. I remember how wrought up and excited the rabbi became when he was made aware of its presence in the schoolroom. "Sacrilege! Sacrilege!" he indignantly cried, and seemed to be afraid to touch it. I remember how he delivered an impassioned discourse to his pupils upon the terrible sufferings to which the Jews had been subjected because of Jesus: he told them how the Jews had been made outcasts and wanderers over the face of the earth; how, for hundreds of years, they had been robbed and pillaged, tortured and plundered; how their beards had been torn from their roots, their teeth drawn from



their jaws, their bodies cast into foul dungeons; how, time and again, they had been put on the rack, subjected to the thumb-screw and burned at the stake, all, all, on account of Jesus.

I remember how aroused and impassioned he became while recounting the frightful sufferings and calamities which had been inflicted upon the Jews, for all of which, in his opinion, Jesus was primarily responsible. "How then," he concluded, "can any self-respecting, loyal Jew take into his hand a book containing the name of Jesus? How can the name of Jesus be thought of without connecting it in the mind of the Jew with the centuries of inhuman outrage and persecution heaped upon him by the followers of Jesus?"

For many years these utterances and teachings clung to my mind, and, doubtless, had their influence in warping my thoughts and in coloring my ideas. I could not but sympathize with the feelings and sentiments of my people, and, in common with my orthodox teacher, feel within my heart that the badge of suffering had been placed upon the Jew by the words and acts of Jesus. All this I felt before I had an opportunity to read and to think for myself,

before the words, the deeds, and the sentiments of the Nazarene were known to me. In time, the life of the man from Galilee became to me a study of profound interest. I read the story of his life as told in the New Testament; I read the conception of Jesus as portrayed by some of the ablest modern Jewish and Christian scholars; I carefully studied his utterances as presented in the gospels; and the picture of this great and wonderful character grew to me to be a very different one from that painted by my venerable and pious, but uninformed, Hebrew teacher. I found that, according to New-Testament traditions, Jesus was born a Jew, lived a Jew, died a Jew. I found that he had preached nothing but Judaism in its purest and simplest form. I found that the thought of establishing a new belief, or even a new sect, was farthest from his mind; that his aim was not to follow after the heathen, but to seek out "the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

I found that Jesus taught nothing and knew nothing about the Trinity, Vicarious Atonement, Election, Predestination, and many other Christian dogmas. He simply knew Judaism, the religion of his birth, which he practised and

preached, and which he tried to keep pure and undefiled.

I found that his mission seemed to be to uplift the lowly and to expose wickedness in high places.

I found that he gave his heart, his soul, and his very being to the poor, to the sick, and to the needy. He said: "I am not come to heal the sound; I have been sent unto the sick."

I found that he was a man of unbounded sympathies and of great moral courage; that he was simply striving to practise and to preach the great moral code established by Moses and the prophets, and to put into practise literally in his daily life the great lawgiver's precept of "love thy neighbor as thyself."

I found his teachings to consist chiefly in the following:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit."

"Blessed are they that mourn."

"Blessed are the meek."

"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness."

"Blessed are the merciful."

"Blessed are the pure in heart."

"Blessed are the peacemakers."

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake."

I found that these are all Jewish teachings reduced to a clear and simple form, which the most orthodox and most pious Jew must accept as a part of his own faith.

Why, then, was it, that, in view of such ethical Jewish utterances, the Jews should have been so mistreated by the followers of Jesus, and Jesus so much contemned by the Jews?

Then followed, on my part, a study of Christianity, and the causes which led to Jewish persecution. It took but little reading to learn that Paul, the Grecian Jew, and not Jesus, was the real founder of Christianity; that Paul was the man who conceived the idea of spreading Judaism among the Gentiles by preaching the God of Israel and the man Jesus, the son of God. I found it was Paul's heroic qualities which enabled him, despite the severest persecution by Jew and Gentile, to surround himself with a large following, not of Jews alone, but of heathen as well, who became believers in the Jewish God, and worshipers of the Jewish carpenter, Jesus, whom they accepted as the son of God, sent upon earth to save the human family,

“hence, begetting the new theology irreconcilable with the doctrines and the discipline of the rabbis.”

History tells that the followers of Paul were known as Jewish Christians, and that the Jews among them continued to observe all the Jewish forms and ceremonies, and to lead Jewish lives, while the heathen converts were not called upon to practise the Jewish forms, or to observe the Jewish rites or dietary laws. A belief in God, and in the teaching that Jesus was the Son of God, made them eligible for membership.

It is true that according to the gospel of St. Mark Jesus said: “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” And in the gospel of St. Matthew we also find a similar utterance, wherein Jesus, in speaking of his disciples, says: “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations.”

But it is also true that in his sermon on the mount Jesus said:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil.

“For verily I say unto you, till heaven and

earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.

“Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least Commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

And later in the gospel of St. Matthew he says:

“I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

“Go not unto the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

To the reader of the Gospel these contradictions may be difficult to understand. It may not seem clear how the statement of Jesus that his disciples shall go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature can be reconciled with the opposite statement, wherein he says:

“Go not unto the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

If the disciples were to follow the one injunction, they must certainly violate the other.

When it is remembered, however, that eminent and devout Christian scholars have made it plain that neither Jesus nor his immediate disciples, excepting perhaps Matthew, ever wrote any part of the gospels themselves, and that the gospels, as we now find them, had no official authority, and were not definitely quoted until about one hundred and fifty years after the birth of Jesus, and that meanwhile they were largely handed down orally from generation to generation, we can readily see how, in these oral transmissions, contradictions could easily creep in. To determine, however, which of these two opposite teachings Jesus expected to be observed, we need but follow the course of action adopted by his disciples, who, during his ministrations, were at his side day and night, breathed in his every word and thought, and faithfully and earnestly endeavored to observe his precepts.

Their conduct after his death makes plain the fact that he had filled them with the thought that they were to devote themselves to the lost sheep of Israel and not to the Gentiles. They faithfully worshiped in the synagog and ob-

served all the Mosaic laws and ceremonies in compliance with the injunctions of their Master, and made no effort to convert the heathen. They insisted that the heathen must first become a Jew before he could become a Christian.

In accordance with the exhortations of Jesus, his brother James, and the other disciples were so insistent on the rigid observance of the Mosaic law, that Peter, one of their number, who had dined with the Roman centurion Cornelius, was severely taken to task for eating forbidden food, and thus violating the Mosaic dietary laws. Peter appeased the disciples by professing to have eaten with the heathen only in response to a positive vision from God.

Despite the fact that Jesus observed all the Jewish laws and ceremonies, and despite the faithful observance on the part of his disciples of the command not to go unto the way of the Gentiles, Paul, who had never seen Jesus and who did not become a convert until three years after his death, in his enthusiasm to proselyte and to spread the belief in the Jewish God and in the Jewish teachings, did not hesitate to assume the right to abrogate or to modify many of the Jewish forms, rites, and ceremonies. It



is self-evident that Paul, by going out to convert the Gentile world, and by abolishing the Mosaic laws when his Master had said that not one jot nor one tittle should pass till all was fulfilled, acted contrary to the spirit and to the commands of Jesus.

At various times, more especially before the Christian era, there were numerous conversions of heathens to Judaism, amongst whom were illustrious Gentiles such as nobles and members of royalty; but in the language of the historian Graetz: "Judaism possessed no eloquent proselytizing apostle; on the contrary, it dissuaded those who were willing to come over by reminding them of the heavy ordeal through which they would have to pass. Jewish proselytes had to overcome immense difficulties. They were not accounted converts unless they separated from their families and from the friends of their youth, in eating and drinking, and in daily intercourse."

The Jews had so much faith in the truth which Judaism taught that, as a rule, they patiently waited for strangers to come of their own accord and knock for admission at the doors of Judaism. Not so Paul. His idea was to unite the whole human race under one belief. He

soon realized, however, how hopeless the task would be if he insisted upon the observance of the severe and rigid ceremonialism of the Jew. To Paul the spirit was everything; the form nothing. Not that Paul loved the letter of the law less, but that he loved the spirit of his religion more. He clearly saw that the apostles of Jesus, by their unwillingness to let one jot or tittle pass from the law, would permit the spiritual enthusiasm which Jesus had created to die out. Paul saw a magnificent opportunity to spread the beautiful truths of Judaism among the millions of heathen. He, however, realized that this could be done only by ignoring the letter of the Jewish law and by observing its spirit. He said: "If the uncircumcision keeps the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? Circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter."

Paul was willing to let form go, to let ceremony go, provided he could implant in the Gentile heart the worship of an all-wise, all-knowing, and all-righteous God, who is the father of the human family, and thus lift the heathen out of the slough of moral degradation and vice,

and fill their hearts with the thought that, tho they might be slaves in the flesh, they had each a soul beyond the reach of earthly kings, a soul given by God, before whom the meanest among men stands the equal of prince or potentate. It was the love for the spiritual welfare of humanity that gave Paul the courage to defy the authorities at Jerusalem, the disciples of his master, even James, the brother of Jesus, and to go out into the heathen world at the risk of life and limb, and to preach what he believed to be the truth.

Thus, from the beginning, do we find that much which was done by Paul and others, in the name of Jesus, was done of their own volition, against the manifest spirit and teachings of Jesus, and for which he should not be held responsible.

As the Jewish-Christian movement gained numbers under the wonderful leadership of Paul, it also grew in power, until it attained to such proportions in Rome—the very heart of heathendom—that it greatly alarmed the authorities. One of the pastimes of the Roman Emperor Nero was the burning of numberless innocent Christians at the stake, because they were unwilling to forsake their faith.

Thus the Christian, in common with the Jew, has had his full share of religious persecution. As soon, however, as Constantine of Rome adopted Christianity, and incorporated therein many heathen customs and practises, and made it the state religion, the Christians in turn became the persecutors, and during the long vista of centuries which have since passed they have sacrificed untold numbers of innocent men, women, and children in the name of Jesus.

How Jesus can be held responsible for such conduct on the part of his misguided followers seems inconceivable!

The savage and cruel persecutions carried on in the name of Jesus, to which for hundreds of years the Jew was subjected, are deplored by none more than by the intelligent Christian himself, who looks upon the record of priestly crime and bloodshed, of religious torture and outrage, as a blot on the fair name of the religion taught by Jesus, since called Christianity, and a stain on the memory of the gentle Nazarene, since called the Savior.

The Jew of to-day resents the idea of responsibility for the crucifixion of Jesus. The Jew of to-day must not, therefore, hold Jesus respon-

sible for acts committed by his blinded followers who flagrantly violated his teachings.

Imagine, if you can, this gentle teacher in Israel coming back to life and seeing his Catholic followers burning at the stake his Protestant followers, all in the name of Jesus. Or imagine him returning to earth and finding both his Catholic and Protestant worshipers persecuting, in his name, the members of the faith in which he was born and lived and died; persecuting his own brethren whom he loved, and for whom he stood ready to make any sacrifice. What, think you, would be his feelings? Unless his spirit were very different from that given him by his disciples, such scenes would rack and distract him. To feel that because of him innocent blood was shed would make him cry out in the agony of his soul, and stretch out his hands in the attempt to stop the murderous work going on in his name. If he could come to life again and learn of the myriads of helpless men and women, who, in his name, were racked and tortured and put to horrible deaths, he would lament the hour that gave him birth, and feel himself to have been a blighting curse where he had hoped to be a blessing.

If, restored to life, he were to learn of the endless and bloodthirsty religious wars which for centuries were waged among his misguided followers; if he were to learn of the carnage and desolation, of the endless bloodshed and sufferings, of the countless persecutions caused by his misinterpreted teachings, he would sit in sackcloth and in ashes, and yield himself up to the anguish of a broken heart.

God, in his wisdom, has ordained that joy may come through sorrow; pleasure through pain; progress through adversity; prosperity through misfortune; tolerance through persecution; enlightenment through ignorance, and that love shall come through hatred.

That God is all-wise and all-knowing is manifest everywhere. That his ways, which seem to us so mysterious, are the ways of goodness and wisdom is manifested every day of our lives. That things which seem curses are turned into blessings is shown us time and again.

If it be true that God at times communes with his children, and that when he has a message to convey he chooses his messenger and sends us his word in his own inscrutable way,

we may say that when God saw fit to reveal himself to man, he chose for his messenger the patriarch Abraham, and gave him the courage to proclaim, in the midst of idolatry, the belief in an unimageable and invisible God. When in the judgment of the Almighty the time was at hand to uplift his people, he chose Moses as his messenger, and touched him with the wand of inspiration, and the children of Israel became the possessors of the immortal Ten Commandments. When the hour arrived for these commandments and the other teachings of Moses and the prophets to be presented in a newer and more attractive form, Jesus arose, and, by his simple, yet matchless oratory, by his self-sacrificing spirit and his devotion to the poor, the neglected, and the forsaken in Israel, created a spiritual wave among his Jewish brethren that was destined to have a far-reaching influence. When the hour arrived for the sublime Jewish truths to be spread among the nations of the world, Paul arose, and became the herald of God's word, and thus brought to the benumbed and benighted minds of the heathen nations a moral joy and a spiritual bliss theretofore unknown to them.

Had there been no Abraham, there would have been no Moses. Had there been no Moses, there would have been no Jesus. Had there been no Jesus, there would have been no Paul. Had there been no Paul, there would have been no Christianity. Had there been no Christianity, there would have been no Luther. Had there been no Luther, there would have been no Pilgrim fathers to land on these shores with the Jewish Bible under their arms. Had there been no Pilgrim fathers, there would have been no civil or religious liberty. Had there been no civil or religious liberty, tyranny and despotism would still rule the earth, and the human family would still live in mental, moral, and physical bondage.

Without Jesus and without Paul, the God of Israel would still have been the God of a handful, the God of a petty, obscure, and insignificant tribe; the magnificent moral teachings of Moses would still have been confined to the thinly scattered believers in Judaism, and the great world of men and women would have been left so much the poorer because of their ignorance of these benign teachings.

Let the Jew, despite the centuries of persecution and suffering, be thankful that there was a



Jesus and a Paul. Let him more fully appreciate that, through the wonderful influence of these heroic characters, the mission of the Jew is being better fulfilled, and his teachings are being spread to the remotest nooks and corners of the world by Christianity, "a religion by which millions have been, and still are, quickened and inspired." Let the Jew not forget that, through the influence of Jesus and Paul, the Ten Commandments of Moses, the sublime utterances of Isaiah, of Micah, of Jeremiah, the proverbs of Solomon, and the psalms of David, have brought, and are bringing, and will continue to bring, balm and comfort, joy and happiness, spiritual bliss and moral sunshine, into untold millions of homes.

Thus is the Christian, through Jesus and Paul, deeply indebted to the Jew; and thus is the Jew also, through Jesus and Paul, deeply indebted to the Christian. The Christian and Jew of to-day, each in his own way, is manfully striving to perform his part in preaching the belief in the same God who is all-just, all-wise, and all-knowing; each is trying to do his share by spreading among his fellow men a love for morality and righteousness.

Christianity and Judaism are supplementary to each other. Had there been no Judaism, there could have been no Christianity. Had there been no Christianity, the message of Judaism could not have become so speedily universalized. There is ample room in this broad world for the followers of both beliefs to accomplish, side by side, a most heroic religious and moral work. A difference in matters of theology need in no way interfere with Jew and Christian preaching and teaching the fatherhood of God, and living in the spirit of the brotherhood of man. So to teach and so to live, whether born under the influence of church or synagog, whether looking upon the Nazarene as man or God, is to win moral happiness in this world and in the world hereafter.

I have known Jews, and, doubtless, you have, who, despite education and so-called culture, were so narrow, so bigoted, that they practised a spirit of aloofness, who, tho willing to buy from or sell to the Christian, and to receive from or render professional service to the non-Jew, were unwilling to eat or to drink with him, to worship with or to cultivate a feeling of fellowship for a Christian neighbor.

I have known Christians, and so have you, who likewise, despite education and so-called culture, were the creatures of such narrowness of spirit, such littleness of soul, that they would draw the line of fellowship at the non-Christian.

Jews might be good enough to have given them their Bible, their Savior; good enough to have given them their moral code, and their religious spirit; good enough to do their share in the world's great economic, industrial, and commercial work; but not good enough for fellowship, whatever might be their moral, mental, or social excellences.

What, think you, would happen if the Galilean rabbi, Jesus, were to come back to life and appear before them as the meek and humble Jew that he was? His Jewish name and face and lineage would cause them to bar against him the doors of their homes, their hotels, and their club-houses, despite the fact that they would continue in their churches to bow down, worship, and adore him as God's only anointed.

God, have pity on such Jews and on such Christians. God, have mercy on such petty, narrow, and misguided souls. Such as these surely need your sympathies and mine, despite the fact

that their conduct carries with it its own punishment,—the punishment of depriving themselves of the benefit and blessings which come from contact with good men and women, whatever their race, or creed, or belief. How small would such souls seem to the broad and tolerant Nazarene! How he would lay the lash on the back of Jews and Christians, whose arrogance would lead them to look upon themselves as better than their neighbors, no matter how great the virtues of such neighbors!

May the spirit of the humble teacher of Galilee enter the hearts and minds of such blinded Jews and Christians, and lead them to judge their neighbors as men and as women, and not as members of a particular race or followers of a particular belief. And may the same spirit lead Jew and Christian to judge each other by the daily life; to shun only the wicked and the vulgar and to welcome to their hearts and their firesides the good, the true, and the virtuous, no matter under what form they worship our common Father.

That the Christian is reaching a better understanding of the hopes, the aims, and the spiritual aspirations of the Jew and his religion is made

manifest by the generous sentiments now so frequently heard from the most orthodox Christian pulpits toward the Jew and his religion, sentiments that are taking the place of the teachings of hate and animosity which, for centuries, through ignorance or malice, fell from ministerial and priestly lips, and instilled bitterness and ill-will into the heart and mind of the child in the Christian Sabbath-school.

Christian ministers are more and more realizing how unchristian it is to disseminate hatred and ill-will, when their master taught them to preach, "Peace and good-will." They are more and more realizing how unchristlike it is to deny to the race that gave the Christian world its God, its Bible, and its Savior, the credit to which they are entitled for all these gifts so dear to the Christian heart. They are more and more realizing that had the Jew perished or been absorbed, the Christian's strongest proof of the authenticity of the Bible and the existence of his Savior would have been lost. Thus is love taking the place of hate in Christian hearts, tolerance the place of intolerance, and thus is a feeling of brotherhood displacing a feeling of enmity.

Nor is this softening of character, this growing gentleness of spirit confined to the Christian. The past few decades have brought a marked change in the feeling of the Jew toward the Christian and his master, Jesus.

The indignation felt toward the very mention of Jesus which filled Jewish hearts during the centuries of persecution at the hands of his followers is speedily being replaced in the modern Jewish mind by a keen appreciation of the beauty and the nobleness of the character of Jesus.

His wisdom and gentleness, his unselfishness of spirit and his love for humanity, his desire to live in the spirit of the early Jewish prophets, and to practise in his daily life the ethics of Judaism, are becoming better understood, so that the modern Jew looks upon Jesus as one of the greatest gifts that Israel has given to the world, and he is, therefore, proud to call Jesus his very own: blood of his blood, flesh of his flesh.

It is not necessary that Jew shall become Christian, nor that Christian shall become Jew, in order that a bond of brotherhood shall prevail. Each in his own way can be true to his

faith, and can continue to observe the laws of God as he understands them, to worship his Creator in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience. Both may continue to live side by side in peace and in harmony, respecting each other's beliefs, manifesting the fullest tolerance for each other's religious opinions, giving each other credit for good intentions, loving each other for their virtues, and casting the mantle of charity over each other's failings.

Jew and Christian should continue to seek out the many beliefs they have in common, and to join hands in working together for humanity.

The object-lesson should become multiplied a thousandfold the world over, which for years existed in my own city, where our worthy rabbi worked in most perfect harmony with a Protestant ex-clergyman and a devout Catholic in their efforts to save the youth in our midst from vice and degradation. What a glory and a joy it would be to the Nazarene, were he now to return to life and find so many of his beloved Jewish brethren and his earnest Christian followers living side by side in peace and in harmony and working together for a common good!

The Jew should continue to cultivate a broad

and liberal spirit. He should avoid the narrowness, the religious exclusiveness of the Pharisee and the social exclusiveness of the Sadducee. His sympathies should continue to widen, his religious horizon to broaden, and his spirit of tolerance should become his crowning glory.

Let the Christian continue to preach and to practise the ethics of Judaism as set forth in the Old as well as the New Testament. Let him strive to eliminate from Christianity the elements of paganism grafted upon it during its earlier history, so that his teachings may become more purified and brought back to the simple belief taught by the humble carpenter from Galilee. Jew and Christian shall thus be brought into still closer touch and into still greater harmony and fellowship. Each, in his own way, may go on striving to fulfil the noble teachings of his belief and aiming to live in accordance with the many lofty and beautiful truths imbibed at the breast of Judaism by the Nazarene and by Paul, which they gave back to the world clothed in a newer and brighter form.

Let the Christian, in accordance with the dictates of his conscience, continue to preach Jesus as "The Divine man who lived humanly," and



let the Jew learn to look upon him as "The human Man who lived divinely."

Jesus, instead of being the dividing-line between Jew and Christian, shall thus become the connecting link between the divine mother-religion, Judaism, and her noble daughter, Christianity.

May Jews and Christians learn to love their neighbors as themselves, and by example as well as by precept become nations of priests and a blessing to humanity.

In this spirit alone can the Christian follow in the footsteps of his master, Jesus. In this spirit alone can the Jew follow the teachings of his gentle and kindly religion. In this spirit alone can Jew and Christian hope to be of service to each other and to the human family.



# What Jew and Christian Owe to Each Other



## II

### WHAT JEW AND CHRISTIAN OWE TO EACH OTHER

Not long ago I received a lengthy communication from a gentleman who took occasion to criticize certain views I had expressed in an address delivered by me before a religious body. The writer of that communication had evidently been born and reared under Christian influences, but had become an opponent of Christianity, and an atheist. Speaking of the influence of the Bible and the Christian religion, he says:

“Civilization, literature, art, education, and general intelligence existed ages before the disturbing elements of Christianity had found lodgment in the human mind. . . . I have always felt that it would be far better if the Old and the New Testament had never existed; if the name of Christ had never been lisped by human tongue; if the religion promulgated in the name of the mythical Jesus had never been

thought of, than that the ages of suffering and devastation, misery and death, had followed the introduction of that name."

My non-believing correspondent spoke but the truth when he said that "civilization, literature, art, education, and general intelligence existed ages before the disturbing elements of Christianity had found lodgment in the human mind." The splendor of the Egyptian court, the greatness of Nineveh, Babylon, and Persia, the literature and philosophy of Greece, the high standard of civilization attained by Rome, existed centuries before Christianity was dreamed of. Seneca was born 2 B.C. and wrote his counsels of moral perfection before Jesus was heard of in Rome. Livy gave to the world great historical works 20 B.C. Virgil had gained fame as a great poet 40 B.C. Plato had written a wonderful philosophy, and Demosthenes had become one of the world's greatest orators 350 B.C. Socrates had taught his pure and uplifting morality four hundred years before the Christian era. Phidias had given his marvelous works of art in marble and in bronze nearly five hundred years before the birth of Jesus, and Homer had sung his immortal lyrics more than eight hun-

dred years before Paul went forth to preach Christianity.

That the influence of the heathen philosophers and scientists, artists and poets, statesmen and orators, moralists and teachers, had a potent influence on their time, and more or less continue to have a potent influence even on our time, will not be denied. No great deed can be achieved and no great thought can be expressed—no matter by whom, when, or where—that is not certain to live and to wield a permanent, though silent, influence. To deny our obligations to the great men of thought and action who belonged to centuries before the Christian era, and who were born and reared under the influence of paganism and heathenism, would be an evidence of ignorance or unfairness. Our present civilization comes from no one stream alone, but is the concentrated result of the influences which have come from all streams and from all the ages of the civilization of the past. The deeds and the thoughts of little value have vanished, and lie deeply buried in the bosom of the past. The thoughts and the achievements of those gone before, which appealed to mankind and which have aided in its building up, have

been handed down, and are likely to continue to be handed down, as long as civilization shall endure. No intelligent believer, however devout he may be, will deny the good which was achieved for humanity by the great and the good of heathendom. And no skeptic nor unbeliever can be just or well-informed, who will deny the still *greater* good which has come to civilization through Christianity.

I cheerfully give testimony to this as a Jew, and when I give such testimony in behalf of Christianity, I believe I voice the sentiment of every intelligent, fair-minded Jew.

It is true that the enemies of Christianity can present a strong case against Christian civilization, by pointing out that, despite Christian teachings and Christian professions, war and destruction, carnage and bloodshed, hate and envy, vice and degradation, wickedness and unholiness, thrive in many places throughout Christendom; that, while professing Christians repeat the teachings of their master, too often these repetitions are mere lip-words that come from the head and not from the heart.

It is not difficult for an unfair critic to find much under heathen civilization to command



respect and admiration, and much under Christian civilization to be denounced and condemned. A spirit of fairness demands, however, not that the virtues of heathenism should be placed in contrast with the evils of Christianity, but that the general condition of society and the average mental, moral, and material condition of the individual under heathenism should be compared with that under Christianity. The most pious Christian, I hope, will not maintain that all human beings were cruel and wicked under heathen civilization, nor that all men and women are saints under Christian civilization. If more people, however, "do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly before their God" under Christian influence than under the influence of heathenism, then the crown of glory must be placed upon the brow of Christianity.

Here is a word-picture of the conditions existing under heathenism painted by a modern writer in *The North British Review*:

"The corrupting influence of paganism met man in every incident of life, . . . in business, in pleasure, in literature, in politics, in the armies, in the theaters, in the streets, in the baths, at the games, in the decorations of his

home, in the ornaments and service of his table; in the very conditions and the physical phenomena of nature. It is not easy to call up as a reality the intending sinner addressing to the deified vice which he contemplates a prayer for the success of his design; the adulteress imploring of Venus the favors of her paramour; the harlot praying for an increase of her sinful gains; the panderer begging the protection of the goddess on her shameful trade; the thief praying to Hermes Dolios for aid in his enterprises or offering up to him the first-fruits of his plunder; young maidens dedicating their girdles to Athene Apaturia; youths entreating Hercules to expedite the death of a rich uncle. And yet these things, and far worse than these, meet us over and over again in every writer who has left a picture of Roman manners in the later republic and under the beginning of the Empire."

Referring to the morality and the philosophy taught by the heathen stoics, Froude declares: "It carried no consolation to the hearts of suffering millions who were in no danger of being led away by luxury, because their whole lives were passed in poverty and wretchedness. It

was not missionary. The Stoic declared no active war against corruption. He stood alone, protesting scornfully in silent example against evils which he was without power to cure. Like Cæsar, he folded himself in his mantle. The world might do its worst. He would keep his own soul unstained."

George C. Lorimer (to whose work on "The Argument for Christianity" I am deeply indebted for many facts here presented) calls attention to the fact that the foremost heathen Stoic philosophers felt little or no moral impulse from their own teachings as witnessed in their lives: "Cato, the elder, was notorious for his cruelty to his slaves. Brutus was guilty of continued and merciless usury. The name of Sallust was a by-word for contemptible avariciousness. And Seneca, the Roman moralist, has not been entirely exculpated from the responsibility for some of the crimes of his royal pupil, Nero."

The condition of women and children, under heathen civilization, was far below that accorded them under Christianity. The heathen regarded woman as his inferior: "In cultured Greece, woman's only avenue to higher education was

through harlotry. In the time of Socrates, only public women enjoyed intellectual advantages, and, during the imperial age of Rome, the condition of woman fell to a low degree."

A writer describing society under the Cæsars says: "We are assured by Seneca that there were women in Rome who counted their age, not by the consuls, but by their husbands, and by Terence that one had married eight husbands in five years. Divorce was resolved upon on the slightest pretext. Cicero put away Terentia apparently because he had a rich ward whose fortune he coveted. Many separated merely for love of change, disdaining to give any reason, like Emilius Paulus, who told his friends that 'he knew best where the shoe pinched him.'"

As against these pictures, let us look upon others presenting an opposite view.

Lorimer speaks of the Christian missionaries who traverse the globe, "to save in time for eternity the low-browed, animalistic benighted masses of alien lands, save them from disgusting wizardry, groveling superstition, the deceptions of lying oracles, and the base rites of idol

service; the ambassadors and soldiers of Christianity plunge into the pestiferous wilderness, wade through malarious swamps, penetrate regions scorched by tropic heat or blighted by winter's cold, and separated from friends and exposed to enemies, endure revolting sights, brave the assassin's knife and the tyrant's dungeon, and pass through suffering the most excruciating to mind and body."

Let us now ask, Of what moral value to the world is all this Christian missionary work? Is it worth the cost?

Sir Bartle Frere, whilst governor of Bombay, wrote regarding the beneficent influence of missionaries as follows: "I speak simply as to matter of experience and observation, just as a Roman prefect might have reported to Trajan or the Antonines; and I assure you that, whatever may be told to the contrary, the teachings of Christianity among a hundred and sixty millions of civilized, industrious Hindus and Mohammedans in India are effecting changes, moral, social, and political, which, for extent and rapidity of effect, are far more extraordinary than anything you or your fathers have witnessed in modern Europe."

Dr. Clafford, in his book on "Inspiration," relates the following incident:

"I would that I could take you to a little village near my station, where they had embraced Christianity in a body but eight months before, and where the high priest of the temple nearby came secretly to me in my tent and asked:

" ' Sir, will you please impart to me the secret? What is it that makes that Bible of yours have such power over the lives of those that embrace it? Now it is but eight months since the people joined you. Before they were quarrelsome; they were riotous; they were lazy; they were shiftless . . . and now see what a difference there is in them! Now they are active, energetic, laborious. They never drink; they never quarrel.

" ' Why, sir, I joined in the persecution when they became Christians and tried to stamp out Christianity before it gained a foothold here; but they stood firm; and now, in all the region around here, the people all respect and honor them.

" ' What is it that makes the Bible have such a power over the lives of those who profess it?

Our vedas have no such power. Please, sir, give me the secret.'”

Mr. Moncure D. Conway, after visiting India, wrote as follows:

“On my book-shelves, you will find copies of all the sacred books of the East, over which I have pored and exulted for years. The noble aspirations of the ancient writers, the glowing poetry of the vedas, the sublime imagery of their seers, have become part of my life. But when I went to the great cities of India, the pilgrim sites, to which throng every year millions of those who profess to follow the faith of the men who wrote those books, and mingled with the vast procession of worshipers at the shrines sacred to the deities, whose praises are sung by the Hindu poets; then, alas! the contrast between the real and the ideal was heart-breaking! In all those teeming myriads of worshipers not one man, not even one woman, seemed to entertain the shadow of a conception of anything moral, or spiritual, or religious, or even mythological in their ancient creed. Not one glimmer of the great thoughts of their poets and sages lightened their darkened temples. To all of them, the great false god which they wor-

shaped (a hulk of roughly carved wood or stone) appeared to be the authentic presentiment of some terrible demon or invisible power who would treat them cruelly if they did not give him some melted butter. Of religion, in a spiritual sense, there is none. If you wish for religion, you will not find it in Brahmanism."

Here and there under heathenism a glorious character such as that of Socrates may be found, with his pure and high morality; or a Marcus Aurelius, whose character for gentleness and benevolence, and whose love of mankind make him stand out in bold relief as among the greatest and noblest of heathen; or an Epictetus, whose moral philosophy still commands widespread attention. These, however, were the rare and exalted exceptions. The average men and women living under heathen influences were low and degraded in their thoughts, and their habits of life were filled with the love of animalism rather than with the spirit of morality and righteousness. To appreciate the high value of Christian civilization, we need but compare the very few names that stand for morality and righteousness which illumine the darkness of the thousands of years of heathenism with the



countless names that stand for the highest morality and righteousness that belong to this century alone. Think of such names as Herbert Spencer, Darwin, Matthew Arnold, Ruskin, Tolstoy, Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, Gladstone, Emerson, Longfellow, Peabody, Peter Cooper, George W. Childs, Tennyson, Whittier, Bryant, Lowell, Holmes, Channing, James Freeman Clarke, Grant, Max Müller, Humboldt, Agassiz, Phillips Brooks, Starr King, Livingstone, and Stanley. Think of these and the legions of others whose lives were open books, whose achievements as soldiers, statesmen, poets, authors, philosophers, scientists, philanthropists, preachers, and teachers, have left a deep imprint on their own generation and will influence untold generations to follow. Remember that these were not only men of deeds, but men filled with high and exalted thoughts and ideals, whose intense love for humanity led them to give the best that was in them for the benefit and the welfare of mankind. The few names mentioned are but as captains of armies of men and women dedicated during this one century to high thinking and pure living. True, that some of these are looked upon

by the orthodox Christian church as dissenters or non-believers, but all of them were nevertheless reared under Christian influence, and to the spirit of Christianity is largely due the moral power these noble characters have sent forth.

If you were to ask the most pronounced atheist or the keenest enemy of Christianity whether he would rather live and rear his children under heathen influences, such as existed before the Christian era, or under the Christian influence which prevails to-day, what, think you, would be his answer? Unless blinded by ignorance or unthinking prejudice, you may rest assured that he would look upon it as a misfortune to him and his if he were denied the privilege of living under an enlightened Christian civilization and were forced to exist and to rear his offspring, surrounded by heathenism even in its highest form.

If men and women are purer to-day than in the dark days of the past; if animalism has been replaced by spirituality, and immorality by virtue, and idolatry by godliness; if man has been brought not only nearer to man, but also nearer to God; if the world to-day is better than the

world of the past, no little of all this is due to Christian thought and to Christian effort. Modern civilization owes a debt to Christianity which it can never repay. The inspired Christian men and women who have labored, and who are laboring for the upbuilding and uplifting of the human family, are civilization's great benefactors, and the world has been made better and nobler for their having lived in it.

But whence came this inspiration that educated the descendants of the savage Huns who had previously lived on roots and half-raw flesh of animals; what led the descendants of the barbaric Goths and Vandals, who at one time drank mead out of the skulls of their enemies, and who adored the sun, moon, and fire as deities; or the descendants of the piratical man-hunting and cruelly ferocious Anglo-Saxon to become gentle, kindly, moral, god-fearing Christian men and women? Need it be said that it was the influence of the teachings "to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before God," the teachings to "love thy neighbor as thyself," and to "do to others as you would have others do unto you"?

And whence did the Christian get these teach-

ings, to the spreading of which he gave his heart, his mind, and his soul? Need it be stated that all these noble and uplifting thoughts came to the Christian from the great book of books, the Jewish Bible?

When the Christian missionary went among the heathen and the pagan, the Franks and the Huns, the Goths and the Vandals, to lead them from heathenism to monotheism, from man-worship to God-worship, he preached to them the thoughts and the ideas of Jewish teachers and preachers; he taught them the songs of David, the proverbs of Solomon, and the commandments of Moses; he implanted in their hearts and minds the teachings of Jesus the Jew and Paul the Jew.

Take out of Christianity the contribution thereto made by the Jew, take out of it the Old and New Testaments; take away from its traditions the Jews, Jesus, Paul, James, Peter, Mark, John, Matthew, and their wonderful spiritual influence, and all that remains of Christianity is pure heathenism.

Can you begin to realize the debt which the Christian owes to the Jew? Can you begin to appreciate the deep and lasting obligation under

which the Christian is forever placed to the race which stands out as having given to the world its greatest preachers and its foremost moral teachers?

Must it not be plain that when, in the past, Christian hearts were filled with malice and hatred toward the Jew that their minds were befogged and beclouded, and when their souls were filled with bitterness and enmity toward the Jew, they were repaying moral gifts and spiritual bequests with base ingratitude?

Let us be thankful that we are living in an age when the debt that Christian civilization owes to the Jew is being more readily acknowledged and more highly appreciated, and that such appreciation on the part of the Christian is bringing Jew and Christian into closer touch and into deeper harmony. Let us feel grateful that the Christian's interest in the Jew and in Judaism is being reciprocated by the Jew's deeper interest in the Christian and in Christianity; that each is finding new virtues in the religious beliefs and character of the other, and that the children of the mother-religion and those of the daughter are thus cultivating for each other a higher regard and a deeper love.

May God in his wisdom permit this holy work to go on, and may we lend our humble aid to speed the day when Jew and Christian, the world over, may work together heart to heart and hand in hand for all things that tend to the betterment of the human family and to the spreading of love, justice, and righteousness.

Thus far I have endeavored to point out wherein the Christian is indebted to the Jew; in doing so, I did not hesitate to lay stress upon the deep and lasting obligation to which the Christian of the past and the present is indebted to the Jew. I emphasized the fact that all that the Christian reveres as sacred and holy; all that he bows down to and worships; much that lifts him above the low and degraded moral condition of his more remote heathen ancestry, he owes to the Jew. But the obligation is far from one-sided. While the Jew has done much for the Christian, the Christian has done much for the Jew. While much of the civilization now enjoyed by our Christian brethren is due to the influence of the Jewish faith and the Jewish teachings absorbed by Christianity, many of the blessings of Christian civilization have likewise spread their influence over the Jews, and have

in turn placed them under deep and lasting obligations to the Christian.

Let me briefly point out the debt the Jew owes the Christian, a debt which the Jew should freely acknowledge.

God had chosen from among all peoples a handful of Jews to become his torch-bearers of moral and religious truth. They little realized when the burden was placed upon them how grave was the responsibility. They little dreamed that to carry this torch of truth through a morally dark and religiously benighted world meant to become a target for the poisonous arrows of hatred and ill-will; of persecution and martyrdom. It is well that the dangers, the sorrows, the pain, and the anguish to be encountered when a great reform is to begin can not be foreseen. Could we foresee what we are to undergo, and what is to befall us while striving to achieve an undertaking, how often would we abandon our efforts, frightened and discouraged!

When Jonah was commanded by God to arise and to go unto Nineveh and cry against it because of its wickedness, fearing the grave responsibility and heavy burden this would place upon him, he arose and fled from before God,

and, instead of going to Nineveh, went to Joppa and engaged passage on a ship going to Tarshish. So, too, with the Jew. If he could have foreseen the centuries of suffering and sorrow, the scorn, the contumely, the execration, and the living hell to which his mission was to subject him, how earnestly, like Jonah, might he have fled in fear and in dismay from the heavy task to be laid upon him.

When the Jews accepted the Ten Commandments from the hands of Moses and dedicated themselves to their observance, how little did they foresee the potent influences which these commandments would have on coming ages; that the faithful and unyielding observance of the commandment, "Thou shalt have no other God before me," would for countless generations make of them a separate and peculiar people, and, for long periods of time, make life for them an existence of torture. For hundreds of years, beginning with the Exodus and down to the Christian era, the Jews, as a rule, not only endeavored to observe the decalog and worship the one and only God, but they aimed to cultivate all the other truths transmitted to them by Moses more faithfully than did any other people.



Out of fear of contamination with the idolatrous peoples by whom they were surrounded the Jews became most exclusive in their spirit. They neither went out to invite others to share their spiritual joys, nor did they even extend open arms to those who, of their own accord, knocked for admission at the doors of Judaism. On the contrary, converts were in every way discouraged by the placing of heavy burdens upon them, by subjecting them to the observance of rigid forms and ceremonies, by compelling them to undergo the painful rite of circumcision, and by cutting them off from association with all their former friends and relatives. So exacting and unbending did the Jews become in their faith, so futile did all attempts prove on the part of their various conquerors to alter, or modify even in a small degree their belief that the title of "the stiff-necked race" has clung to them through all these centuries of sorrow and tribulation.

History records that Antiochus Epiphanes, the Syrian tyrant, issued a decree commanding the people of Judea to renounce the law of their God and to offer sacrifices to the Greek gods. Altars and idols were to be erected everywhere

for that purpose, and unclean animals, particularly swine, were to be used at the sacrifices. The temple in Jerusalem, the only place of holiness then on earth, was thoroughly desecrated, and the God of Israel was apparently unseated by the Hellenic Zeus. It was a crime, under this decree, to practise Judaism. Death threatened all who refused to obey the emperor's decree. But death lost its terrors. Despite the fact that the officers of Antiochus killed those who were found even reading the Jewish law, and hanged Jewish women with their babes on the walls of the city when they found that the children had been circumcised, the Jews refused to yield or to abandon their faith, rose in rebellion against the mighty and despotic conqueror, and under the guidance of the family of the Maccabees vanquished the great army of Antiochus and regained their national independence, and the privilege of worshiping their God in accordance with the dictates of their conscience.

Again, under the reign of the Romans the Emperor Caligula, addressing the Judean envoys to Rome said: "So you are the despisers of God, who will not recognize me as the deity, but who prefer worshiping a nameless one,

whilst all my other subjects have accepted me as their god." His determination to introduce statues of himself into the temple of Jerusalem led thousands of Jews to declare they would rather suffer the penalty of death than allow their temple to be thus desecrated.

Had there been no break in the ranks of Judaism, the Jews, despite their dispersion throughout the world, would have continued to observe the rites of their faith and to cling religiously to their traditions; and all the truth and the pure, uplifting teachings of Judaism would have remained confined to the sprinkling of Jews, while the rest of the world would quite likely have continued to remain morally and spiritually benighted.

But God has willed it otherwise. It was evident Jehovah felt that the hour was at hand when the teachings and beliefs of the great family of man should become widely spread; and so Jesus was chosen as the messenger to create a renewed spiritual wave, if only among a handful of disciples, who were to reaffirm the truths and utterances taught and preached by the earlier prophets in Judea. Among these disciples, the great apostle to the Gentiles, Paul, who

broke out on the world's religious firmament as a bright and glittering star, had been chosen to perform a great and heroic work for Judaism and for the world.

I must here content myself with saying that it was Paul's broad cosmopolitanism that gave Christianity to the world. It was his far-seeing and high-thinking mind which enabled him better to appreciate the priceless value to humanity of the truths held sacred by, and confined to, the Jews. It was Paul's genius which conceived the idea of breaking away from the encrusted traditions of the Jew, and going forth to convert the Gentile; to give his strength and his heart, his mind and his soul to uplift his brethren outside of his faith, and to bring them nearer to the God of Israel. He saw clearly that the Jews were preaching universal truths, but made no effort to disseminate them. He realized that for the faith of his fathers to accomplish its high purpose there must be teaching and preaching among non-believers and in foreign lands; and so, alone and unaided except for the presence and help of God, he set out on his heroic task, preaching the beautiful Jewish utterances set forth by Jesus, whom he had accepted as his

Master. Thus Paul began a missionary work that in time revolutionized the religious spirit of the world, and which is destined to continue moving onward as long as civilization shall stand.

The heathen world for centuries had been waiting for Paul's missionary work. Heathenism in all its various phases had utterly failed to satisfy the human hearts that were yearning and thirsting after a pure, lofty, and spiritual belief. The souls of men, through paganism and idolatry, had been deadened and their moral sense stunted. Their lives, from the cradle to the grave, were most selfish and thoroughly materialistic. Here was the long-sought-for spiritual balm brought to their very doors by Paul, who taught that the meanest among them had a soul which was precious in the eyes of the one and only God, who was above all and for all. It was Paul who was the first to give the heathen object-lessons of the Jewish spirit by his own unselfish life, and to teach, in the spirit of his Master, that love is greater than hate, that kindness, and forgiveness, and peace, and humility, must fill the human heart before happiness can be attained in this world or in the world to come.

Is it surprising that the parched and dried-up soul of the heathen should have greedily drunk in these beautiful truths which, tho old and familiar to the Jew, were entirely new to the heathen? Is it surprising that Christian churches should have sprung up wherever Paul preached, and that these churches should have grown, expanded, and developed until, in the course of time, they became so formidable that Rome (then the great empire of the world) found it wise to adopt Christianity as its state religion?

I can not hope here to give even a sketch of the wonderful achievements of this great religion of Christianity; how its martyrs suffered at the stake for their faith, how its priests encircled the globe if only to save one soul; how its friars went from place to place shoeless and bare-headed, and lived on crusts and suffered hunger, thirst, and pain while teaching and uplifting the spiritually oppressed and the morally forsaken; how its sisters of mercy gave their health and strength, their hearts and minds to the suffering and sorrowful, to the sick and the needy, to the aged and the feeble. Generation after generation armies of men and

women consecrated themselves to their holy religion, and lived and suffered and died unknown and obscure deaths, while faithfully and heroically striving to do their Master's work. If the Christian men and women who, during all of the past centuries, led pure and holy lives and sacrificed themselves for the welfare of their fellows could be marshaled in procession, they would form a line which would many times encircle the globe.

During all these centuries, a most industrious work was carried on in spreading the Jewish Bible, its teachings, and its influences into every nook and corner of the world. The teachings of Moses, the Psalms of David, the Proverbs of Solomon, the prophecies of Isaiah, the precepts of Micah, the pathetic utterances of the patient Job, all became household words in huts, in caves, and in palaces. The God of Israel, who for hundreds of years had been the God of a tribe, of a petty race, became the God of hundreds of millions. The Ten Commandments, which from the time of Moses to the time of Jesus had influenced a handful of God's children, were taught and preached and spread by Christian missionaries until they affected for

good the lives of untold generations, living in all climes and belonging to all races of men.

The moral and religious seeds which the Jew had placed in the hand of the Christian were taken by the latter and scattered to the remotest corners of the world, and implanted into the waiting hearts of heathen and pagan, of savage and barbarian, of master and slave. Nor has this work ceased. On the contrary, it is yet in its earliest infancy. More Christian men and women are dedicated to-day to the spreading of a knowledge of the Bible among the heathen and the untutored than ever before in the history of Christianity. More money is being contributed to the cause of missionary work than was ever before known in the Christian era.

Here is a brief statement of what has been done in this direction in more recent years: "The British and Foreign Bible Society in its current report gives its total issues of the Bible at one hundred and thirty-one million, eight hundred and fourteen thousand, seven hundred and ninety-six, and those of other kindred organizations at eighty million, eight hundred and eighty-nine thousand, two hundred and one. Here, then, we have more than two hundred



and twelve million copies of the Bible sent out annually all over the world, a large portion going to the front, where soldiers of the cross are in direct and fierce conflict with heathen peoples. No statistics can adequately express the influence of this widely disseminated book in the dark places of the earth. Not alone, however, must the success of this work be judged by these figures, but by its acknowledged philanthropic and humanizing effects. It has reduced the speech of savages to written languages, has translated the Bible into almost every spoken tongue, and has thus opened the way for the intellectual development of races that have been deadened for ages. Moreover, it has been the direct cause of emancipation of millions of slaves; it has proclaimed the equality of mankind; it has forever quenched the Suttee fires, which for centuries disgraced India; it has suppressed infanticide; measurably overcome polygamy; rung the knell of caste, and has in the very recent past civilized such peoples as the Fijians, Tahitians, and the inhabitants of Madagascar and the Sandwich Islands."

Compare all this with what the Jew is doing toward spreading the influence of his faith and

his Book of books and note how severely he suffers by contrast.

I received recently a letter from a prominent Eastern rabbi and this is what he wrote: "Who publishes the Bibles to-day? The Christian. Who reads them? The Christian. Who is willing to sacrifice an entire day each week for worship and spirituality? The Christian. Who shows reverence, awe, respect, decorum, and silence in the house of worship? It is 'the Israelite of the spirit,' whom I call Christian."

The Jew ever has enjoyed and still continues to feel a self-satisfied air regarding his religious teachings. As a rule, he seems to think that they need no spreading and that these teachings must of their own accord disseminate themselves.

If the Jew believes that his teachings are of value to mankind, if he holds that his Bible is a boon to the human family, he must feel a keen appreciation of the Christian's heroic labor in spreading its teachings.

The Jew has many grievances to lay at the door, not of Christianity, but of perverted Christianity. While perverted Christianity practises intolerance, hatred, cruelty, injustice, and ill-

will, Christianity, pure and simple, in common with pure and simple Judaism, teaches love, humility, kindness, justice, peace, and good-will. The Jew to-day enjoys many blessings for which he is indebted to pure and enlightened Christianity. Despite all the misery and suffering and oppression which in some parts of the world still prevail, he lives in an age better, purer, nobler than any in which his ancestors lived. Despite the fact that much of the Christianity which is about us is still perverted, the opportunities of the Jew for mental, moral, religious, and material progress were never so grand in all the centuries of his existence. And for all these blessings he is indebted, in no small degree, to the influence of pure Christianity. Let the Jew therefore realize that however much the Christian owes to him, his debt to the Christian is equally deep and lasting.

Jew and Christian have been necessary to each other. One without the other could not have achieved the wondrous work which both have performed in the interest and for the welfare of humanity.

Without Judaism, Christianity would have had no foundation. Without Christianity, the

spirit of Judaism would have wielded no universal influence. Had there been no Christianity, Jesus, together with Paul, and his other apostles, would have remained obscure and unknown, and the spiritual blessings which, through their influence, were to spread throughout the world, would never have been enjoyed by the human family.

It should be a source of no little pride to the Jew that his was the race to give to Christianity its Master and Savior, its noblest teachings and commandments, its holy apostles and self-sacrificing missionaries. How great should be the satisfaction of the Jew to feel that the blood of his blood, the flesh of his flesh, has proven so great a moral and spiritual blessing to hundreds of millions of his fellow creatures.

The Jew must not look upon Christianity as an effort to pervert Judaism, but rather as an effort on the part of Paul and his followers to take the heathen of the past ages and step by step bring him nearer and closer to the spirit of Judaism, and to the spirit of its God.

The Christian owes much to the Jew, the Jew owes much to the Christian. Let each fully and deeply recognize the debt he owes to the other.

Let the Christian go on bravely, earnestly, faithfully fulfilling his broad and holy mission. Let him continue to spread the seeds of morality and righteousness where ignorance and degradation prevail, where idolatry enslaves the mind, and where unbelief is a hindrance and stumbling-block to spiritual development.

Let the Jew do his fullest share in aiding these good works, and let him not rest content until, in the language of Zangwill, "His mission shall have been fulfilled, when all Christians shall have been converted to the observance of the pure and lofty teachings of their Lord and Master, the humbly born and devout Jew, Jesus of Nazareth."



**Is the Messiah Yet to Come?**





### III

#### IS THE MESSIAH YET TO COME ?

THE evening of evenings, which, as a boy, I looked forward to, with interest and pleasure, was that of the Sedar, celebrated on the eve of the Passover.

Preparations were made for weeks in the home for this important event, and for many days the household was unsettled, and a stranger could readily see that something uncommon was about to take place. House-cleaning became the order of the day. Every nook and corner of the home was cleansed and ransacked and every particle of leavened bread removed. The dishes and cooking-utensils, used throughout the year, were carefully stored away, and those reserved for the days of Passover were brought out from their hiding-place. The interest of the household was centered in the Sedar festivity, on which occasion the table was decorated with the best the home could afford. Whatever of plate, whatever of candelabra, whatever of

fine linen and glassware was in the possession of the family, was made use of on this state occasion.

The table, in its holiday glory, laden with unleavened cakes and the mysterious dishes intended for Passover symbols, was surrounded by all the members of the family, dressed in their best; while the master of the house, reclining on soft pillows and robed in his shroud of pure white, read the story of Israel's exodus from Egypt, their miraculous crossing of the Red Sea, their wonderful escape from their enemies, and the final destruction of their Egyptian pursuers.

To me, as a boy, the service, the surroundings, and the family board, with its unusual decorations and its many mysterious dishes, were all of profound interest. On the table was a dish of parsley, the latter to be dipped at the proper time into salt-water and distributed to every one at the table, and eaten after repeating a certain prayer praising God as the Creator of the fruit of the earth. Another dish was nearly containing three unleavened cakes, the shank bone of the shoulder of lamb, and an egg, both previously roasted on coals. The two latter in

the course of the evening's service were removed, and all laying hold of the dish said: "This is the bread of affliction eaten by our ancestors in the land of Egypt," inviting all who were hungry to enter and eat thereof and to celebrate with them the Passover.

Distributed over the long table were numerous decanters of unfermented Passover wine, which refreshed but did not intoxicate, and which were used to frequently fill the glasses as the ceremony progressed. Later in the service, and after the first washing of hands, the master of the house lifted the unleavened cake in the dish, and, showing it to the company present, said: "These leavened cakes, wherefore do we eat of them? Because there was not sufficient time for the dough of our ancestors to leaven when they were thrust out of Egypt," after which the master of the house pointing to the greens of horseradish in another dish, said: "This bitter herb, wherefore do we eat it? Because the Egyptians embittered the lives of our ancestors in Egypt with cruel bondage." Then followed the breaking of two unleavened cakes—every one at table receiving a piece of each—which were eaten after the reciting of a prayer

praising God as the King of the universe who brings forth bread from the earth.

The master of the house then took from another dish some bitter herbs, dipped them into a mixture of almond and apples worked up to the consistence of mortar, and, passing a portion to each one present, recited a benediction praising God for sanctifying Israel with the commandment to eat bitter herbs.

Then came the eating of horseradish, which was partaken of by the master and all present; a small portion of the same being placed between two parts of unleavened cakes and passed around to each and eaten after all had repeated the Talmudical statement of the pascal arrangements according to Hillel, who, during the time of the Temple, on the festival of Passover did likewise eat bitter herbs with unleavened cakes.

All these ceremonies were ever of profound interest to me as a boy, but by far the most interesting, if not most thrilling, feature of the feast was the filling of the great cup with unfermented wine dedicated to the Prophet Elijah, and the opening of the door to admit of his mysterious and invisible presence sym-

bolical of Israel's hope of the appearance of Elijah to announce the coming of the Messiah.

I remember with what profound and naive interest I watched Elijah's cup of wine, and how, in my nervous excitement, I imagined that during the brief moment while the Messianic prayer was being recited, I saw the wine growing somewhat less as the lips of the imaginary Elijah were being pressed to the cup.

Very few Jews living in this age, and especially in this country, can appreciate the hope and the comfort, the joy and the satisfaction, that this faith and sincere belief in the coming of a personal Messiah brought to the hearts and minds of the oppressed and the persecuted in Israel during all the ages of his national misfortunes while yet in Judea and during the centuries of suffering to which he has been subjected since his dispersion. It was this faith and this hope in the regeneration of their people that gave the Jews the courage, the fortitude, and the strength to bear sorrows and burdens, calamities and misfortunes, such as would have caused most peoples to succumb.

At no period in their national history were

the Jews more ready to welcome a personal Messiah than during the time of Jesus.

For decades, they had been living under Roman rule. Their political independence was gone. They were mere vassals of Rome and were under the complete control of the Roman governor and his horde of soldiers. The tribute exacted from them by Rome was a heavy burden, under which they groaned and chafed, but to which, at the point of the sword, they had to submit. Their hearts yearned and longed for a deliverer who would release them from the hated Roman yoke and once more give them their national independence.

For a brief period, the coming of Jesus brought hope and faith and joy to some Jewish hearts. Here they believed was the long-looked-for Messiah who, by his power and his divine favor, would drive out the enemy from the land and reestablish the kingdom of David. Judea at that time was divided into two political camps. The conservative party, realizing the military feebleness of the people of Judea and the utter hopelessness of attempting a rebellion, counseled submission to Rome. The radicals, which included the hot-headed and more adven-

turous spirits, known as the zealots, advocated rebellion, and cursed those who paid tribute to the Roman tax-gatherers, denouncing them as traitors to Judea.

The radicals hailed Jesus as their political deliverer, and proclaimed him the King of the Jews. But the zealots were incensed at his doctrine to render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, thus advising submission to Roman rule and the payment of tribute to Rome. Jesus, in common with the conservatives, realized the utter hopelessness of any attempt by the people of Judea to rebel against Rome. He knew full well that such attempt must end, as it did forty years later, in the utter destruction of Jerusalem and in the bloody and relentless massacre of the Jewish people. He therefore preached to them a kingdom, but not an earthly one. He spoke in most beautiful terms of the kingdom of heaven, and urged upon his hearers so to live that they might inherit it. He said: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt

and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

Beautiful as were these teachings, they did not seem to appeal to the mind of the ignorant and the unthinking who followed him. They were not in a frame of mind to grasp and to comprehend a far-off and distant kingdom in the realm of the spiritual. They knew and felt only the needs of the present. They were oppressed and were in the hands of the national enemy, and they yearned for relief. They wanted a leader, and a political redeemer, who would drive out the hated Roman and once more establish their temporal kingdom.

It was this thought, this desire, this spirit, that prompted them, as Jesus rode into Jerusalem on that fatal day before the Passover, to cry out: "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord." His silent acquiescence in the cry hailing him as the King of the Jews subjected him to the charge of treason to Rome. It was upon this charge that he was finally convicted before Pilate and crucified by the Romans, in accordance with the Roman law.

With the death of Jesus, aside from the hand-



ful of disciples who still clung to his memory as that of the Messiah, those who had looked upon him as their political redeemer lost, for the time being, faith and hope. They awaited the coming of another leader who should, by driving out the Roman hordes, prove in verity to be their kingly redeemer and bring back to them their national independence.

Not so were the more educated and enlightened among the Jews who lived in the time of Jesus. These did not look for a personal messiah. They read the utterances of the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Micah as pointing to certain moral effects, as the result of certain moral causes. These prophets, as they were called, were purely moral teachers; neither soothsayers nor fortune-tellers. They seemed to have a divine grasp of the laws of moral cause and effect. They were able to warn and to foretell that certain immoral causes must bring ruin and disaster.

Hillel, the philosopher and teacher of Jerusalem, Philo, the Jewish historian and philosopher of Alexandria, as well as the other educated and enlightened among the Jews, looked forward not to the coming of a personal deliverer or a divine

Messiah, but for a messianic age, for an ideal condition of society, a condition of universal progress and peace. With them it was a hope for a good time coming, not for the Jews alone, but for the human family. It was a hope for a moral exaltation first of Israel then of mankind, rather than a regal dynasty. The narrow hope of the one-sided Jews was that of the restoration of the throne, and of the political independence of Israel. The broader hope of the thoughtful and the enlightened was that of a reign of universal peace.

The same broad hope of a messianic age fills the mind of the enlightened thoughtful Jew of to-day. He no longer looks for the restoration of Israel. He feels that the country of his birth or of his adoption is his country and his fellow citizens his nation. The present efforts of many earnest and zealous Jews to re-establish Zion as a national home, not for themselves but for the oppressed and persecuted among our people, he looks upon as impracticable and visionary, and as largely a waste of time and of energy. The enlightened Jew has faith and hope in the twentieth century. He believes that the century now begun will be the

most progressive in the history of civilization; that the march of progress will, in that era, make gigantic strides; that, in the decades near at hand, enlightenment will prevail, persecution and oppression will cease; that the Jew will be permitted to breathe the air of religious and civil freedom throughout all lands, and that the need will thus be removed for the reestablishment of Zion. Just as America is the Zion of the American Jew and England the Zion of the English Jew, so, he believes, will even the despotic Russia and Rumania of to-day become the Zion of the Russian and Rumanian Jews of the twentieth century.

The nineteenth century began to lay the foundation for universal peace and progress. Not least among the great moral and religious achievements of that wonderful century is the emancipation of English and American slaves, of the Russian serfs, the holding of the first international religious congress at the World's Exposition in 1893, and the great international universal peace conference recently held at the Hague. These wonderful events would all have seemed impossible during the preceding century; yet it has been our good fortune to be

living witnesses of them all. Little as our fathers of the eighteenth century dreamt of these remarkable happenings, so do we little dream of the yet more wonderful happenings which are in store for those destined to live in the century to follow. We feel ourselves broader, more enlightened, less bigoted, and far more tolerant than were those who lived in the generations of the past, yet our spirit will seem narrow indeed, our thoughts cramped, and our ideas limited, compared with the still broader and more enlightened minds to be inherited by our children and our children's children. They are truly destined to live in the messianic age when, as in the hope of Isaiah, swords shall be beaten into plow-shares, spears into pruning-hooks, and war shall be no more.

Few of us realize how much we can hasten such a glorious day. Many of us imagine that the uplifting of a nation is a sudden movement spontaneously participated in by the whole people. This is a great and misleading error. The world is made up of a family of nations. The nation is composed of a multitude of families and the family consists of a number of individuals. The unit of society is the individ-

ual. All onward and upward movements must therefore begin with the individual. As are the individuals, so is the nation. As are the nations, so is the world.

What, think you, would be the condition of the world if all individuals led pure and righteous lives? How near at hand, think you, would be the messianic age if all men loved their neighbors as themselves and faithfully endeavored to observe the golden rule? How far off, think you, would be the day when universal peace would prevail if all men would cultivate patience and forbearance; if they would love the right instead of exercising their might; if they would seek out the good rather than the evil in others; if they would give each other credit for good intentions and do their fullest share to bring enlightenment where ignorance prevails, to supplant tears with joy, sorrow with happiness, want with plenty, despair with hope? How near at hand, think you, would be the day of the universal brotherhood of man if we thoroughly respected one another's opinions, and tried to win over the sinner to the ways of righteousness through love rather than through fear, if we pitied the guilty and manifested love for the oppressed?

In the language of a modern writer, "Let us join hands together and make the good times real." We, each of us, can, in our limited way, become a personal messiah and hasten the day of universal peace and good-fellowship. We can do this by perfect obedience to the moral law, and by an earnest desire to make the world about us brighter and more cheerful. We can do this by encouraging virtue and honor, and by guiding into the perfect way the morally blind and the erring. Unlike the selfish, who think only of saving their own souls, and in so doing are no more commendable than those who think of saving only their own dollars, let us strive to be of service to others, lend a helping hand to the fallen brother, and offer an encouraging word to the misguided sister. Let us do this no matter what their color or creed, or race, or belief.

The belief in a personal messiah served its purpose well. It brought hope where there might have been despair. It filled the heart with faith that otherwise would have become hopeless. It lent courage to the faltering and gave strength to the oppressed, the persecuted, and the down-trodden.

The belief in a messianic age, in an ideal state of society, in a universal brotherhood, and an era of universal peace will achieve still higher and greater good. It must enlist the earnest, hearty, and sincere efforts of all lovers of humanity into one harmonious, united effort. It must tend to tear away the barriers of prejudice and intolerance which still exist between man and man. It must help to break down the walls of tradition and superstition which have kept men apart, and which have tended to cultivate and to bring out man's lowest and basest, instead of his highest and noblest qualities.

The belief in a messianic age must tend to fill the hearts and minds of men with the thought that there is but one heavenly Father and that all human beings, whatever their color or their creed, are equally near and dear to him. The belief in a messianic age must bring us to feel that, in the kingdom of God, only he shall be recognized who looks upon all men as his brothers and upon himself as a personal messiah sent to teach and to preach the doctrine of a messianic age, of universal peace, of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.





**Are the Jews God's Chosen People?**



## IV

### ARE THE JEWS GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE?

SOME one has said that "every man creates God according to his own image."

To those who believe in a corporeal God, to those who give him a form, who give him human attributes, his appearance is made to vary with the thoughts and the conceptions of men. To one he is simply man magnified with all man's passions and failings; to another he is a being whose time is absorbed in closely watching, in detail, the minute actions of his living creatures and writing them down in his Book of books for good or ill as, in his opinion, their acts may merit. To some Jews, he is a being in human form who lives in accordance with the laws of Moses and whose whole attention is absorbed in exclusive watching and caring for the children of Israel.

Such as these make of God a narrow, cruel, petty, unjust being, totally unfit to rule the uni-

verse and wholly unworthy of the worship and adoration bestowed upon Him by a devotional world.

There are those who interpret the nineteenth chapter of Exodus literally, and firmly and sincerely believe that the children of Israel are God's chosen people, the elect of Jehovah; that he loves his peculiar people above all his other creatures; that time and again he has set aside his otherwise eternal and unchangeable laws in order to answer their prayers and to comply with their wishes, and that in the future he may again be expected to do likewise.

This belief, during all the past ages, has resulted in incalculable harm to the Jew and has done God, so to speak, a great injustice. For the Jew to assume for himself the title of being God's chosen and anointed has naturally and justly been looked upon as unwarranted arrogance by the rest of the world, which it has not been slow to resent. This arrogance, on the part of the Jew, has led to his exclusiveness, to his unwillingness in the past to mingle freely with those about him; this, in turn, could not but engender hatred and ill-will; and, whenever the others possessed sufficient power, it ended

in relentless persecution. It is true that this exclusiveness saved Judaism, but had it not been for the breaking away of Paul and his followers, the influence of Judaism would have remained confined to a handful of Jews. On the other hand, among such non-Jews as believed the claim to be a true one that Israel is the chosen and the favored of God, the thought could not but follow that God, in having favorites, could not be all-just nor all-wise. A wise father will have no favorites for fear of engendering hatred, jealousy, and envy against his better-beloved children. Jacob, for example, by manifesting favoritism for his son Joseph, engendered for the favorite the hatred and enmity of his other sons. A just God will love all his creatures alike and will not do for one what he is not ready to do for all. Thus did the doctrine of God's favoritism for Israel injure the Jew and lessen the good opinion of many toward Israel's God.

That the belief in a corporeal God was not the belief of the high-minded and the clear-minded among the Jews is made manifest by the utterances of those among the teachers in Israel who speak of Him as all-wise, all-know-

ing, ever-present, eternal, incorporeal, without form and without shape. That these did not arrogate to Israel a monopoly of God's care and providence is likewise made manifest by the prayer repeated so often in the synagogue, "Let the righteous of *all nations* rejoice in God's grace and exult in His justice."

It is this teaching of an incorporeal God, this prayer that the righteous of *all nations* shall be saved, that places Judaism upon the highest and noblest religious plane, and exalts it above those beliefs which teach that God is merely an exaggerated man who has likes and dislikes; who loves and hates; who shows and withholds favors; who is revengeful and cruel; who is despotic and tyrannic, and who can be appeased and satisfied only by offerings and compliments, by praise and flattery.

It is this teaching, "Let the righteous of *all nations* rejoice in God's grace and exult in His justice," that makes Judaism a broad and tolerant religion, that robs it of the spirit of narrowness and bigotry, and manifests clearly that Judaism, in the opinion of the broad-minded Jew, is the shortest, but not the exclusive, path to moral and religious happiness. It is this

teaching that the righteous of all nations shall rejoice in God's grace which indicates plainly that Judaism does not claim a monopoly of *all* religious truth, but that it recognizes the fact that the holy and the righteous, the pure and the virtuous, are destined to a better life by whatever name they may call God and in whatsoever temple they may worship the Creator of the universe. This thought is emphasized in the Talmud, which says: "The righteous of other nations have a share in the bliss of the world to come."

In speaking of Judaism, Rev. Voysey, of London, the eminent theistic preacher, has this to say:

"The Jewish theology is the only one that can venture unarmed to face the weapons of modern science and Biblical criticism. It has no definitions of God and it needs none. The Jewish conceptions of God outstrip the highest yet known among all other religions in the world. It leaves Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Parseeism, Mohammedanism, and Christianity all far behind it, and has no more to fear from modern science or criticism than had they never been born. As a religion, it is

at once the most intellectual and the most emotional of all faiths. It never violates reason, and yet it brings the soul nearer in holy and joyful communion with God than all the other religions put together. Needing no idols, no mediators, no priests, it brings us face to face with our Eternal Father and Friend."

We must remember that this is the testimony not of a Jew, but of one born and reared a Christian, and to-day a distinguished preacher of the theistic faith.

I have known men so narrow, so bigoted, and so intolerant, that they believed that, however pure and upright one's life, however virtuous one's conduct, however unselfish and self-sacrificing one's efforts, however pious and saint-like one's earthly career, he is doomed to eternal perdition unless he believe in their particular creed and subscribe to certain dogmatic doctrines. It is such a spirit which gave to the world its army of religious inquisitors; that would build a wall around God's greatest gifts to man, his reason and his intelligence, and that would persecute, if it could, all who would dare to make use of these blessed gifts.

Let us raise our voices in daily thanksgiving



that we live in an age and in a country where every man's opinions are his own; where, if he will, he may follow the belief of his birth, or such other belief as may more strongly appeal to him; where the good that he does is appreciated by his fellows—whatever may be their religious doctrines—and where the moral or religious wrong that he does is a matter between him and his God.

That such conditions are conducive to the highest and best moral results is made evident by the fact that the people of this country stand acknowledged as the happiest, the most civilized, and among the noblest in the world.

May humanity never again see the day when men shall have the power, at the point of the sword or through threats of the dungeon or stake, to force their fellow creatures to accept religious beliefs abhorrent to them, and to compel them to profess a faith repugnant to their conscience and to their reason, and thus to make of them the most despicable among mankind: liars and hypocrites.

Tho the children of Israel are not God's chosen people in the sense that he loves them more than he does his other creatures; tho

they are not the anointed of Jehovah in the sense that he would transgress any of his own laws to oblige them; tho they are not God's favorite sons and daughters in the sense that he would do for them what he is not ready to do for all, the history of the Jews would indicate that they had been chosen for a special mission, to perform a certain exalted service for humanity.

Nations, like individuals, seem to be appointed for a special purpose. The history of civilization shows that while many nations have achieved certain ends, some particular nation has proved itself best fitted to perform some special service. Some nations have devoted time, thought, and energy to poetry, to art, to sculpture, and to philosophy, but the nation of nations preeminent in these achievements is ancient Greece, whose wondrous works are destined to stand as a monument to the poetic, artistic, and philosophic genius of its people. Some nations have devoted time, thought, and energy to the science of law, but Rome is the nation of nations which stands preeminent as lawmakers, whose remarkable system of jurisprudence will continue to have its abiding influence for countless gener-

ations. Some nations have devoted their time, their thought, and their energy to establishing civil liberty. The Jews were the first to create a republic, but their republic crumbled and failed and soon developed into a monarchy. Ancient Rome tried a republican form of government and failed. France has tried it at various times and failed, and is now struggling with what, at best, is yet an experiment. Other countries have likewise tried and failed, but to-day, as a remarkable example of man's power of self-government, stands the American republic, the world's greatest object-lesson of civil liberty and political freedom.

Many nations have devoted their thoughts, their time, and their energies to religion and to the cultivation of morals, but the people of peoples who stand out in bold relief as the masters in the world of religion and morality, are the Jews, who gave to civilization monotheism, its belief in the oneness and unity of God, its Ten Commandments and its ethical utterances which have moved and influenced for good the human family as it was never before influenced. Thus have the various nations of the world been chosen to perform certain

high and important functions for the betterment of the whole human family.

Civilization will ever remain indebted to Greece for Homer, Sophocles, Socrates, and Plato. Posterity can never repay the debt it owes Rome for Augustus, Justinian, and its other great lawmakers. The human family will ever remain indebted to the American republic for Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, and Lincoln, as the fathers and preservers, on a broad scale, of civil liberty and political freedom. And, finally, civilization must ever acknowledge the service performed, in the interest of morality and righteousness, by Abraham and his descendants, Moses, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, David, Solomon, Jesus, Paul, and the host of other Jewish teachers and prophets, whose words and whose deeds have left an ineffaceable imprint on the character and history of man. Like the wise and able commander who chooses for certain heroic performances those who by training and temperament are peculiarly fitted for certain achievements, God has evidently chosen certain peoples to perform certain works for which by temperament and disposition they were peculiarly fitted. This

does not mean that God loves them more than he does his other creatures, or that they need expect special rights or privileges withheld from others. Each has been permitted to enjoy the fruits of the achievement of the others, and each must be willing to give freely in exchange the results of his own achievements.

To have been chosen to perform for humanity some great and important service does not mean the right to receive greater privileges; on the contrary, it means higher and greater responsibilities. As a nation of priests, as the preachers of the monotheistic belief, as the teachers of the world's highest code of ethics, as the people of the book which has done heroic work to uplift mankind and give the world a basis for righteousness that now lives as firmly implanted in the human heart as the rock of Gibraltar on the shores of the Mediterranean, the Jews had placed upon them a most grave and serious responsibility.

The priest to be respected must practise what he preaches. The preacher, to carry weight with others, must cultivate the virtues he dwells upon. The Jew, to fulfil his mission, must be a living object-lesson of the fruits of the

morality and righteousness taught by his book and by his early fathers. It is not sufficient that his was the race first to conceive the unity of God, to give to the world the Ten Commandments, to preach the equality of all mankind before God, to abandon idolatry and paganism, to practise the virtue of moral self-restraint, to give the world its weekly day of rest, to teach the dignity of labor; but he must give added force to all this by the purity of his daily life, by the devotion to all these teachings and doctrines in his daily practises.

That which is excusable in the layman becomes unpardonable in the priest. The transgressions of the follower are not likely to be nearly so serious in their influence upon others as are the transgressions of the leader. Leadership means increased cares, increased burdens, increased responsibilities.

The Jew stands out in the world's history as the leader in morality and righteousness. To maintain this leadership demands continued and unceasing obedience to the laws of purity and virtue, integrity and honor, right-acting and right-living. Only by such course of action can he continue to deserve the title of having

been chosen by Providence for a high and noble purpose. Only by such line of conduct can he continue to deserve the esteem and respect of his fellows. Only by such practises can he deserve to remain the heir to the great Book of books given the world by his people, and to merit a share of the glory which they have thus won from grateful mankind. Only by such action can the Jew hope to see Isaiah's prophecy fulfilled, when he says:

“And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever.

“And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings and in quiet resting-places.”

To be the chosen of God, to perform some great and lasting service for mankind, to be selected for a mission which has carried with it suffering and sorrow, misery and persecution, hatred and degradation, but which has brought to the human family joy and happiness, virtue and morality, goodness and godliness, is to fill a higher place in the world's history and in man's estimation than to be simply the favored of God, with everything to receive and nothing to

give. To be the son who has gone forth and, through trials, tribulations, suffering, sorrow, pain, and agony, to have performed the heavy and responsible task laid upon him by his father for the good of the family, is to be more blessed than to be the pampered son living on the paternal bounty.

Let the Jews feel grateful that they are no dearer or nearer to God than are his other children, and they can thus more keenly realize and appreciate that God is absolutely just. Let them feel grateful that Providence has deemed them worthy to have placed upon them the heavy burden of priesthood, so that they may be the moral teachers of mankind. Let them feel grateful that, through this burden placed upon them, the morality of the world has been uplifted and its power for righteousness increased, not only through Judaism, but also through its noble and powerful daughters, Christianity and Mohammedanism. Let them feel grateful that they have been chosen for high duties rather than for small favors. Let them, by the purity of their daily lives, by high thinking and simple living, prove worthy to be of the people who have placed civilization under last-



ing obligation, so that it may truly be said of the Jews that they are a kingdom of priests. Let them strive to be worthy members of the race destined to yet further perform a most important part in the moral and religious history of mankind.

Let the Christian, who has fallen heir to all that the Jew has given to the world, likewise feel the responsibility of priesthood; and let him cultivate the spirit which will make of every Christian layman a priest, who by his daily life, by his kindliness of spirit, his purity of thought, his nobility of action, will show himself worthy of the moral and religious blessings inherited from the Jew. Let the Christian feel that the work he long since undertook to spread the truth and teachings of the Jewish Bible to the remotest nooks and corners of the globe is one that must win for him a title of nobility.

Let him continue his world-wide missionary work among heathen and savage, among barbarians and idolators, but let him instil the teachings of morality and righteousness, not at the point of the sword nor at the mouth of the cannon, but with kindness and patience, with tolerance and forbearance. Let him live in this spirit

and work in this spirit, and let him look for no reward for such service beyond the consciousness of having faithfully performed his share of man's work in striving to reach upward toward God, and in aiding the morally benumbed and benighted to see the light of truth and the beauty of righteousness. If the Jew and Christian will each manfully perform his mission, will each give the other credit for good intentions, will work for the essentials of religion common to both, and regard each other's non-essentials of religion in a spirit of love, both will find the world amply broad as a field of action, both will find that whether or no they are the elect of God, they are at least his faithful servants, and that in earnestly and unselfishly doing God's will, they shall enjoy his grace and delight in his justice.

## **Why Remain Jews ?**



## V

### WHY REMAIN JEWS?

I THINK it was the German poet Heine who said, "Judaism is not a religion—it is a misfortune."

This was said to have been uttered at a time when the Jews in Germany, as well as the Jews of most other countries, were laboring under many disabilities; when, in the language of a modern writer: "The Jews of Germany were still separated from the rest of human kind and compelled to reside in the miserable ghetto, that had to be locked with mighty gates after dark, and on the great holidays, to keep plundering and pillaging mobs from them.

"Restrictions hounded the Jews wherever they turned.

"Where others could walk where they pleased, the Jews were confronted everywhere with the sign 'Jews Not Permitted.'

"Where others could follow whatever profession or calling they chose, the Jews had to con-

tent themselves with the lowest of callings,—that of pedlar or petty trader, or money-lender, which the city government graciously permitted them to follow, in return for exorbitant sums of money.

“Where other denominations found no restrictions in the number of their annual marriages, the Jews were restricted to twelve couples annually, and many a betrothed couple had to tarry many a long year before their turn came, and had to pay dearly for the privilege when it came.

“Where others could promenade in the walk, the Jews had to tramp alongside it and endure any ruffian’s jeer and insult and assault, without as much as the right to bring legal charges against their Christian assailants.”

Under such conditions on the one hand, and the conditions of a Judaism thoroughly rabbinized and deadened, with its beautiful spirit largely throttled by form and ceremony, with its dogmas and traditions worshiped as the religion itself; with the mind of the Jew blunted and stunted by his hundreds of years of persecution; and the sordidness of the Jew keenly developed by the degraded occupations into which

he was forced by Christian oppressors on the other hand, is it to be thought strange that ambitious intellects like the Mendelsohns, Herz, the German poets Boerne and Heine, and thousands of other intelligent Jewish men and women, should have abandoned the faith of their fathers?

Is it to be wondered, with so little to appeal to the mind in the perverted Judaism of the early part of the nineteenth century, and so much to appeal to in the way of a removal on the other hand of social and material disabilities, that many of the most brilliant Jewish minds who lived in Germany during the early part of this century should have turned, in the hope of relief, to Christianity?

Graetz, the historian, tells us that in a few years in Germany over twenty-five hundred Jews became Christians, nearly reducing to one-half the Jewish population of Berlin, including many of the best German Jewish intellects. How futile the hopes were of many of these converts is made plain when we read how the Christians, before the Jew became a convert, placed upon him every disability and every indignity and subjected him to every insult in order to force

him to become an apostate, and how these very Christians, after the conversion of the Jew, would taunt him with being a traitor to his faith and his people.

Human nature, at best, is weak and fallible. The quality of true heroism is not given to us all. If heroes were as numerous as the sands of the shore, we should not immortalize them in poetry and in song, nor decorate their graves, nor build high and enduring monuments to their memories. It is because heroism is so rare that we bow down and worship it. It is because greatness is so uncommon that so many make of it a fetish.

Living as we do in an age of tolerance and religious independence, in a land of liberty of thought and freedom of action, it is easy for us to condemn, as cowards and as traitors, the Jews of the earlier part of this century, who became Christians converts, not from conviction, but for expediency; not for love of the new faith, but in the hope of relief and toleration.

But let us place ourselves in their condition. Let us imagine ourselves surrounded on the one hand with a religious atmosphere which makes no appeal to heart or mind, and laboring under



every social and political disability, while on the other hand, opportunities present themselves for the removal of such disabilities,—to say nothing of the opportunities for a higher, broader development of all the qualities within us, how few could withstand the terrible temptation to relinquish the faith looked upon by many as a misfortune?

The wonder is not that, in those days, so many became Christian converts, but that so few abandoned a faith which had become, in the fullest sense, a bane and a burden. No other religious faith in all history presents, as does Judaism, the picture of its members being subjected to such frightful physical and mental sufferings in all countries and in nearly all ages, and nevertheless showing comparatively so few apostates.

If to suffer all the indignities that the human mind can conceive, if to submit to outrage and to persecution, to unspeakable cruelty and to the deepest degradation, century after century, in country after country, and all for an ideal, all for the belief in the doctrine of a one and only God; if to suffer all this for a principle is heroism, then are the Jews truly the world's greatest

heroes. If it is great to die for an idea, and greater still to live and to suffer for an idea, then do the Jews rank foremost among those who have lived, suffered, and died for what they believed to be the truth; then must their history be handed down through all the ages of civilization as that of the martyr-race of the world; a race that was ready to suffer, and die, for a belief. It is such a history which prompted the divinely gifted German Jewess Rahel, who became a Christian convert, to say to her devoted Christian husband on her sick-bed a few days before her death, in 1833:

“With delighted exaltation, I look back upon my origin, upon the link which my history forms between the oldest memories of the human race and the interests of to-day, between the broadest interval of time and space. That which was during the early part of my life the greatest ignominy, the cause of the bitterest sorrow—to have been born a Jewess—I would not now have otherwise at any price.”

It required, in earlier periods and in many countries, great heroism to remain a Jew. It requires extraordinary heroism in some countries even to-day to remain a Jew. It requires

little heroism to remain a Jew in this and in some other lands.

The Jew of the past became an apostate, as a rule, not from choice, but from necessity. The Jew of this land, should he become a convert, need do so not from necessity, but purely from choice. It is because of this free will that we so rarely hear of an American Jew changing his faith. It is because he can live his life in all its fulness and meaning, that the Jew, breathing American air or the air of that other magnificent Anglo-Saxon country, Great Britain, rarely feels prompted to leave the faith of his fathers. The Jew of this age and of this land would have but two reasons for changing his faith, conviction or convenience. For the Jew, who, after careful investigation and mature thought, decides that Christianity or any other belief contains more of the truth than does Judaism, and who as a searcher after truth leaves the religion of his fathers and adopts the religion of his convictions, there can be naught but respect and admiration; respect for the honesty and the strength of his convictions; admiration for his courage in inviting on the part of the cynical

and the distrusting, possible attacks upon his motives. For the Jew, however, who changes his belief merely for the sake of convenience, in the hope of escaping what he looks upon as a burden; or who flies from it in the hope of winning for himself a higher or better place, socially or materially, there can be naught but contempt. A Jew such as this merits, and, as a rule, receives the condemnation of the world, and lives and dies despised by all whose good opinion is worth having. A Jew such as this can not but be a fraud and a hypocrite, and his days and nights can not but be embittered with the thought that he has sold himself for a mess of pottage, and that his life is but a living, empty lie.

If we were asked why we remain Jews, we could but answer that we can not honestly and consistently become anything else. It is true that many of us have been indifferent to our belief; that many of us have taken little or no interest in spiritual affairs; that many of us are merely race Jews rather than observers of the Jewish religion; yet I am sure that, as a rule, if pressure were brought to bear upon any of us to join another faith, our interest in

our own faith would immediately become aroused, and we should study it as we had never before studied it. Such study would bring out to us, as it has never before been brought out, that all that is claimed for other religions we find in our own. If other religions claim to teach love and faith, charity and benevolence, justice and righteousness, meekness and humility, virtue and obedience, truth and honesty, chastity and purity, we should find that they have sucked in all these teachings at the breast of Judaism, and that, as members of the Jewish faith, we are getting our lessons of right-acting and right-living from the very fountainhead. We should find, for example, that all that Mohammed is to the Mohammedan, and all that Jesus is to the Christian, God himself is to the Jew. We should find that, as Jews, the Father can do for us all that his prophet Mohammed can do for the Mohammedan, and all that Jesus, who to the many millions of pious Christians stands as the Son of God, can do for the Christian.

As Jews, though deprecating his means, we can not but have a profound respect for the ultimate achievements of Mohammed, who drank

in at the breast of Judaism so many of its beautiful truths, and then went forth to preach and to teach to the heathen of Asia the God of Israel: the one and only God. As Jews, we can not but have the profoundest respect for the achievements of Christianity, which has uplifted from a condition of idolatry and heathenism untold millions, and filled them with a feeling of spirituality and a love for man and God.

True, the Christian world is still permeated altogether too much with hate and iniquity, with wickedness and ill-will; and still indulges in war and bloodshed; all this, however, is not because of the teachings of Christianity, but despite the teachings of that great religion. True, the Christian has not attained the ideal established by his religion, but mark his wonderful advancement from the state of his semi-savage ancestor, who, before he became a Christian, had drunk out of the skull of his enemy. Mark the Christian's advancement from his forefather's standard, who, while yet a heathen, pitted men against ferocious beasts in the arena and delighted in seeing his fellow beings torn to pieces before his very eyes by the bloodthirsty lion and the ferocious tiger.

Despite our profound respect for such great religious beliefs as Mohammedanism and Christianity, and our admiration for the service rendered to mankind by spreading the belief in the God of Israel and in the truths uttered by the Jewish prophets and teachers, we, as Jews, find no cause to abandon our own belief. We find no cause to leave the mother religion and to go to the daughter. If, as Jews, we can not "do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God" (see Micah vi. 8), we are not likely to do so as members of any other faith. If, as Jews, we can not so live as to inherit the blessings of this world and of the world to come, we are not likely to inherit them as the followers of any other faith.

To some it may be a comfort and a spiritual aid to believe that some one, centuries ago, suffered for them, and, by the forfeiture of his life, atoned for their sins. It is not difficult to understand how the hearts of millions can be touched and moved to greater good by the picture of Jesus on Calvary. But to the Jew who is taught that every man is himself responsible to his God for his sins, and that no one can relieve him of his punishment,

the doctrine of vicarious atonement can make no appeal. The Jew ever has felt, and ever will feel, that if he commits a wrong, myriads of other men, ready to suffer and to die for him, can not mitigate his sin; that he and he alone, as the sinner, must pay the penalty; that he and he alone must atone for his misdeed.

No other religion can sufficiently appeal to the Jew to lead him, from conviction, to change his belief, for the reason that, as stated by an eminent Christian writer: "It is Judaism which preaches true democracy; which teaches that all men are equal; that there is no superior but God, and that all laws must emanate from him; that no law can be held to emanate from him unless it tends to increase the happiness of the whole people."

A modern Jewess has wisely said: "The final test of every religion is a simple one; whether or not it brings us to God; whether it makes us to know and to love him; whether it puts God into our life, not mechanically and perfunctorily, but as a living, working activity, as a real and holy presence, sanctifying our whole existence, our daily and practical life, our cares and duties,



our sorrows and joys, our relation and service to our fellow men."

If, as Jews, we do not know God; if we do not love him, it is no fault of Judaism. It would be folly to change our belief in the hope, that as followers of some other faith, we may learn to know and to love him more readily. Israel has been appointed as the high priest of humanity to perform a high and sacred duty. Tho no nearer or dearer to God than are any of his other children, the Jew nevertheless has grave responsibilities. To shirk them would be to play the part of a coward. To fly from them would be to deserve the condemnation of mankind. It is Israel's province to preach the doctrine that all men have souls, and that these souls if pure stand equal in the eyes of God; that God's laws are for all His children and are meant to bring happiness to all the families of the human race. The Jew, despite suffering, despite persecution, must remain a Jew until justice, love, and truth shall universally prevail; until hate, wickedness, and injustice shall disappear, and until it shall be universally proclaimed that "God is one and his name is one." Then will there no longer be Jew or

Gentile; then will all men truly be brothers; then will Israel's mission, as the high priest of humanity, have been achieved and the prophecy have been fulfilled that in Abraham "shall all the families of the earth be blest."

## **Shall Jew and Christian Intermarry ?**



## VI

### SHALL JEW AND CHRISTIAN INTER- MARRY ?

MANY years ago I had an intimate Christian friend, who has since passed away. Often we conversed together on subjects that were close to our hearts. His warm sympathies, his broad spirit, his honorable pride, and his manly qualities won my esteem and my affection.

As we learned to know each other more intimately, there was scarcely a subject that we did not feel ourselves at liberty to discuss freely and frankly. Themes that between those born and reared in different faiths and under the influence of different traditions might seem like forbidden subjects, were debated by us on free and open ground. That we were friends in the full sense of the word was made manifest by the fact that we did not hesitate to think aloud in each other's presence. And so in this spirit we found ourselves discussing together one evening what he saw fit to term the "Jewish question."

"As a friend of the Jews," he said, "I must criticize them for the exclusiveness and clannishness which have done much in the past to make them stand out as a separate and distinct people."

"If the Jew is clannish and exclusive," I answered, "it is because he does not care to intrude where he feels that he may not be welcome."

"Not so," he replied. "The Jew who is educated and cultured is welcome wherever he goes. If he keeps himself aloof he is not only doing others an injustice, but he is doing a wrong to himself as well."

Unwilling to admit the charge of wilful exclusiveness made against the Jew, I contended that he was mistaken and that the charge was not well founded.

"I will prove to you," my friend continued, "that you, in common with the other members of your faith, are also clannish and exclusive."

Surprised at his statement, more especially since I had led myself to believe that I made no distinction of race, creed, or faith in my friendships or associations, I challenged him to submit his proof.

“Very well,” continued my friend. “Let me first ask, whether you regard me as a man of probity and character, and a man who is able to comfortably support a family.”

Assuring him that I not only believed him to be a man well able to take good care of a family, but that I was a warm admirer of his character, he continued, saying: “Very well, then; let us now suppose that your little four-year-old daughter is grown into young womanhood and that she and I fall in love with each other, and that I should ask you for her hand. Knowing me as you do, what would be your answer?”

The question was so direct, and so unexpected, that I was unable to make prompt reply. It brought before me the whole question of intermarriage, a question to which I had theretofore given little or no thought, and upon which I had no settled conviction.

“Aha!” said my friend gleefully as he noted my hesitation. “Did I not tell you that you, in common with the other followers of your faith, are exclusive and clannish? If we were both Jews or both Christians and I should ask for the hand of your daughter, and you knew that I was a man of character, well able to support

her and make her happy, you surely would not hesitate to give consent; but because I am a Christian you do hesitate, and I am sure you can give no reason for your hesitation other than that I am not a Jew. What better proof do you want of your spirit of sectarianism and exclusiveness?"

I was compelled to acknowledge that my friend had won his case and that his charge was well founded. Then followed an exposition on my part of the thoughts which, passing through my mind on hearing his question, had made me hesitate to give answer. I pointed out that the results of marriage are at best uncertain; that even under the most favorable circumstances, where belief is the same and where the social status is the same, there is ever the risk of discord in married life. Then how much greater the risk where there exists a difference in belief, or in traditions, or in education between the contracting parties?

Continuing, I pointed out that where Jew and Christian were equal in education and in culture and could agree upon a common religious belief, and where the relatives on both sides, whose association would have a constant in-



fluence on the husband and wife, looked with favor upon the marriage, I could see no reason for objection; but that, in my opinion, if Jew or Christian, or both, were loyal to their respective faiths, and if, in addition thereto, the immediate relatives looked with disfavor upon the union, then to consent to such a marriage was simply to invite domestic discord and unhappiness. I pointed out that while youth, in its passion and thoughtlessness, might not stop to consider all this, and, despite these probabilities, might rush into marriage, such rash action would not in any way alter the inevitable results.

“Imagine,” I continued, “a child being born into a family where a pious Christian had married a faithful and believing Jewess, and imagine this child reaching an age when its religious training should begin. Imagine still further the friction and the discord which must follow when the Christian father insists that the child must be brought up under the influence of his church, and the Jewish mother insists that it must be reared in her faith. If the father’s will is obeyed, the mother is made wretched by the thought that her child is being reared in religious error. If the mother’s wishes prevail, the

father is made unhappy by the thought that his child is a heretic and that the salvation of his soul may be imperiled. Can such a condition mean anything else but the destruction of all domestic happiness? Is it wise knowingly to court such unhappy possibilities and to place in jeopardy the happiness of two souls, to say nothing of the happiness of the children likely to be born into such union?"

My friend, in turn, admitted the force of these arguments, and confessed that the question of intermarriage between those of divergent faiths was a matter of grave consideration.

The Jew is not the only one who must pause and ponder over the problem of intermarriage.

I received a call the other day from a young man, who greatly surprised me by saying that years ago, when a boy not over six or seven, he caused some damage at my place of business and hastily scurried off. The matter had passed entirely out of his mind until it came back to him a short time ago. Being a Catholic, he was about to attend the confessional, but before doing so, he wished to make restitution for the injury he had committed, in

order that he might enter the confessional with a clear conscience. He had, therefore, come to ask that I assess the damage which he stood ready to pay.

I assured him I had not the slightest recollection of the circumstances and that, so far as I was concerned, he might consider himself absolved. This to him, however, was not satisfactory; he insisted that I name some amount and permit him to pay it, so that his conscience might be put at ease. Finally, to satisfy him, he was told to assess the damage himself and to place the amount into the charity box of his church. Content with this proposal, he thanked me and was about to take his leave, when, prompted by the desire to know more about the young man and the spirit which led him to manifest such unusual evidence of a developed conscience, I engaged him in conversation and led him to tell me more about himself. In the course of the conversation I learned that he had been a devout member of the Catholic Church for a number of years, and that its influence had been to him a source of great moral and religious happiness. He stated how by the aid of the church and its religious teachers he had

kept out of temptation, and had been aided to lead a pure and righteous life.

"Are your parents Catholics?" I asked.

"My mother is a Catholic and my father was a Protestant, but of late years he has become a skeptic and a scoffer," he answered.

"How does he look upon your membership in the church?" I asked.

He replied: "He ridicules it and jeers at both my mother and myself for our religious devotion."

"What effect does that have on your domestic relations?" I asked.

"It makes mother and me thoroughly wretched, but it has taught me a very important lesson."

"May I ask what is the lesson?"

"It has taught me the lesson," he replied, "never to marry outside of my own faith."

"Am I to understand, then, that if you should fall in love with a woman, not of your faith, you would permit your religion to cross your love?"

"I should consider it a grave misfortune to fall in love with a woman not of my faith, and if she was unwilling to join my church I should not marry her if she should lay at my feet all the

riches of the Orient. I find happiness in my religious faith, and since men marry to secure happiness, I feel I should be but destroying mine to marry one who could not worship as I worship, and who might insist upon rearing my children without a faith, or in a faith that to me was error, and which to me would mean the loss of their souls."

Thus do we see that intermarriage is a question not peculiar to the Jew, but is a problem, a most serious problem, between Christians of different denominations as well.

"Are we to understand then that you are opposed to intermarriage?" I hear some ask.

There are some questions that can not be answered intelligently by a positive "yes" or "no," and this is one of these questions. To answer "yes" would show the spirit of narrow-mindedness. To answer "no" would be apparently to advocate endless domestic misery and wretchedness. Each case must be considered separately and individually, and I am therefore not absolutely opposed to intermarriage, but am in favor of it only under the proper conditions.

There are many who can recall the time, some decades ago, when an intermarriage

between Jew and Christian was of the rarest occurrence. They can further remember when such an intermarriage did take place, what a great sensation it created. The Christian was ostracized by his friends and relatives; and the family of the Jew would sit in mourning and look upon him as dead. Rarely do we hear of such scenes to-day.

But a few years ago, in discussing the question with one of our former rabbis, the point arose as to what percentage of intermarriages existed in our midst. We estimated such marriages to be about two or three per cent. of our Jewish community. On making out a careful list, imagine our surprise to find that they represented fully ten per cent. of our Jewish population. Analyzing the conditions, as well as we could, we found that, as a rule, these marriages had occurred between those who were either indifferent to their faith, or who had been able to come to a satisfactory understanding as to their religious worship and the religious training of their children. We further found that, so far as it was possible to know, these marriages seemed fully as happy in their results as those between Christians or between Jews, an

absence of divorces being notable among those who had thus intermarried.

The time may come when there will be but one church, the Church Universal; a time when all men will worship at one footstool. When that day shall have come, the problem of intermarriage will have disappeared, and no longer will there be a question of Catholic or Protestant, Jew or Christian; but, so long as differing faiths and differing creeds exist, and so long as men and women remain firm followers of such faiths and earnestly believe in the doctrine that to accept any other is to destroy one's soul, so long should thoughtless intermarriage be discouraged. For men and women born and reared in different religious atmospheres to rush into marriage without consideration of the influence their religious thought and training will have upon their lives is to hazard their future happiness, and to increase the possibility of causing more human misery and more domestic wretchedness. Where Jew can honestly become Christian or Christian can honestly become Jew, or where one is willing to yield in all religious matters to the other, these risks are much lessened. All

other things being equal, there can then be no good reason why happiness should not follow. I have known marriages of this sort to bring the most perfect domestic happiness.

“But,” I hear the Christian say, “if Christians are to intermarry with Jews and become converted, what is to become of Christianity?” And, on the other hand, I hear the Jew say: “If Jews are to intermarry with Christians and become members of that faith, what is to become of Judaism?”

My answer to both is, that God is neither Jewish nor Christian. He is the Father of the whole human family, and he loves all his children equally well, no matter by what name he is called, and no matter whether he be worshiped in synagog or church. Judaism and Christianity are but two out of many ways of reaching God. The purpose of both beliefs is simply to bring men and women nearer to their Maker. The Christian who follows the teachings of his belief can not but lead a pure and righteous life, and hence is brought nearer to God. The Jew who faithfully observes the commandments of his religion can not but be a manly and a godly man, and therefore is like-



wise brought nearer to his Maker. Hence, should a Jew honestly become a true Christian, or a Christian become a true Jew, the soul of neither can be injured by the change. In either event both will be destined to "rejoice in God's grace and exult in his justice."

But, unless the Christian can honestly become Jew, or the Jew can honestly become Christian, or unless both can, without prejudice, tolerate the belief of the other, greater happiness will result if each will marry within the bounds of his own faith.

This view may be disappointing to the one who hopes that to-morrow, or next week, or next year, may bring about the universal brotherhood. But wiser by far must it be not to attempt to hasten such a day at the expense of human happiness. Better by far that the process of coming together shall be slower and safer, that needless human suffering and sorrow be saved, that the present ratio of intermarriages on the part of Jews with Christians shall be increased only as the liberality of spirit and the broadening of religious tolerance will permit, than to encourage thoughtless intermarriage with its consequent unhappy results.

God builds slowly, but wisely. He has so made man that he must crawl before he can walk. Surely he must have in mind the final bringing together of all his children under the banner of human brotherhood, when all the artificial barriers of creed and denomination erected by man shall disappear, and all men shall look upon one another as the children of one Father and the members of one human family.

May men hasten such a day by filling their minds with knowledge and their hearts with love, by cultivating a broad, tolerant, and generous spirit, and by respecting the religious beliefs of others, however much they may differ from their own. Only in this way can the day be brought nearer when intermarriage may be safely increased, and when those born under Jewish influences may become stronger and nobler by marriage with Christians, and those born under Christian influences may become better and purer by marriage with Jews.

# Moses, The Greatest Man of Antiquity



## VII

### MOSES, THE GREATEST MAN OF ANTIQUITY

THE fact that the world's great scholars proved that myth and legend had crept into the Bible, that writing had been unknown among the Hebrews until four hundred years after their exodus from Egypt, and that much of the Pentateuch must be considered as tradition rather than as history, makes it difficult to give an authentic account of the life of Moses. Following the Biblical story of his career, we find that he was born in Egypt at a time when Pharaoh, fearing the rapid increase of the Israelites, had issued an edict that all new-born male Hebrew children should perish. The uncommon beauty of the infant Moses moved his mother to make an extraordinary effort to save his life. After secreting him for three months, the fear of detection led her to place him in a basket lined with pitch, which she hid in the bulrushes near the shore, where he was discovered by one of the

maids, who accompanied the princess to her daily bath.

The extreme beauty of the child appealed so strongly to Pharaoh's daughter that she decided to adopt him as her own. At the suggestion of his sister, Miriam, who stood at hand to watch the fate of the little one, the infant's mother was called and employed by the princess to perform the part of nurse. In due time the child was returned to the princess, and was adopted by her as her son, whom she called Moses, as she said because he had been drawn out of the water.

It seems like the hand of destiny that a member of the race which Pharaoh was trying to cripple should become one of the royal household, receive the benefit of the highest education attainable at the time, and that he should use the same toward weakening the power of Egypt.

Among the legends told of the childhood of Moses is one related in the Koran, which explains the impediment in his speech in the following manner:

"Pharaoh one day carrying him in his arms when Moses was a child, he suddenly laid hold

of Pharaoh's beard and plucked it in a very rough manner, which put Pharaoh into such a passion that he ordered him put to death. But Asia, his wife, representing to him that he was but a child, who could not distinguish between a burning coal and a ruby, he ordered the experiment to be made. A live coal and a ruby being set before Moses, he took the coal and put it into his mouth and burnt his tongue, and thereupon he was pardoned."

We know little about the life of Moses until he reached the age of forty, excepting what we gather from certain traditions which tell that as a young man he was given command of an army and sent to conquer the Ethiopians, who had overrun Egypt. By skilful generalship, he drove the enemy back to their own country, closely following up his victory until he found himself and his conquering army at the very gates of Saba, the royal city of Ethiopia, which he meant to besiege. While he was supervising the preparations for the siege, Tharbis, the daughter of the King of Ethiopia, caught sight of Moses, and because of his military bravery and skill, and his handsome and attractive personality, fell in love with him, and, through the

medium of a faithful servant, made overtures to him of marriage. Moses accepted the offer, made satisfactory terms of peace with the enemy, married the princess, and led the Egyptians back to their own land.

Having reached the age of forty with apparently no other view in life than to become a member of the Egyptian priesthood, he found himself confronted one day with an Egyptian task-master, who was smiting one of his Hebrew brethren. The decisive hour of his life had come. He must decide whether to cast his lot with his oppressed brethren or continue as a member of the royal Egyptian family. As an Egyptian, it could be no concern of his to see a Hebrew slave punished by his task-master. As a Hebrew, his blood must have boiled to see one of his helpless brethren set upon and cruelly beaten by a heartless overseer. If a struggle arose within him between love of ease and luxury on the one hand, and love for his brethren and hatred of wrong and oppression on the other, his sense of manhood must have prevailed, and led him to smite the Egyptian and hide his body in the sand. His experience of the next day settled his fate. Intervening



as a peacemaker between two quarreling Hebrew slaves, he was accused by them of having killed the Egyptian. When the matter became known Pharaoh sought to slay Moses, but he fled and found his way to the land of Midian. While at rest at a well, his manliness was again put to the test. The seven daughters of the priest of Midian came to draw water for their father's flocks, but were driven off by Arabian shepherds. But Moses drove off the rude shepherds, and the young women were enabled to water their flocks. When the priest of Midian heard of the conduct of Moses, he offered him a home and gave him his daughter Zipporah as a wife.

For forty years Moses dwelt in the land of Midian, leading the peaceful and uneventful life of a shepherd.

At the age of eighty, when most men are thinking of death, and preparing to end their days, the news came to Moses that his brethren in the land of Egypt were oppressed more than ever. The desire was aroused within him to free them from bondage, and to lead them out of the land of slavery into a new country where they might work out their own destiny. Un-

aided, except by his brother Aaron, and with a firm faith in his God, he presented himself before the new Pharaoh, who during the intervening forty years had ascended the throne, and demanded that the children of Israel be permitted to depart from Egypt. The boldness of the demand stands unparalleled. To venture as Moses did before a mighty and despotic ruler with no greater reenforcement than a shepherd's staff, demanding that he let a vast number of his valuable bondmen free, was in itself an act of sublime courage. To persist in the demand, after it had been refused, and to do so in the face of the fact that the despot had doubled the task of his slaves because of the demand made for their release, was a courage still more sublime.

Literature does not record a more remarkable instance of moral and physical courage. On the one hand, we have the picture of the utter contempt with which the demand of Moses was treated by Pharaoh, who made his feelings manifest by compelling the Hebrew bondmen thereafter to find their own straw to make bricks; and, when they cried aloud that they were compelled to make as many bricks as be-

fore, and to find their own straw, and were beaten by the royal task-masters for their failure to do the impossible, he drove them forth and instructed the overseers to enforce rigidly his orders. On the other hand, we find Moses beset by his brethren, who had charged him with being the cause of their greater misfortunes, and who looked upon him as an enemy, because through him their burdens had been made heavier.

Moses, however, never failed in courage, and finally he found himself at the head of his brethren, who at last were permitted to leave the land of their bondage by the reluctant Pharaoh, who had become terrified by the awful visitations upon his land and his people, which he was led to believe were inflicted upon Egypt because of his refusal to let the Hebrews go.

After Moses had accomplished the high purpose of setting his enslaved brethren free, it might be supposed that his life-work was at a close, and that he could now end his days in peace, happy in the knowledge that he was a great liberator who had won for the down-trodden and the oppressed the great boon of free-

dom. But instead of his task being ended, it was just begun. No sooner did he find himself in the wilderness than he was made to realize that difficult as had been the task behind him, the task before him was still more so. He found himself surrounded by a horde of freed slaves, who through hundreds of years of oppression and degradation had lost all sense of appreciation of freedom and of the work achieved for them by Moses. The task before him was simply appalling. The lamentations and the cries of young and old for the flesh-pots of Egypt, for the food and shelter which slavery had insured, but which freedom in the wilderness made uncertain and precarious, raised a storm which would have unnerved a giant. It was this crisis that brought out the greatness of Moses and his power over men, a power that finally enabled him to control the turbulent spirits by which he was surrounded, and to regain their obedience and confidence.

No other leader in history had the task of taking a horde of unthinking freedmen, more or less degraded, and making of them self-governing citizens. Republicanism and democracy were up to that time words unknown in the

vocabulary of men. It seemed the natural condition that the human family was to be ruled by kings and despots, and the thought of self-government had not as yet entered the human mind. With the traditions of royalty hoary with age, even the enlightened and the cultured would not have attempted to establish among themselves any government other than a monarchy or a despotism; and yet, we have one man who though possessing the power to make himself a monarch, and establish a hereditary kingdom, set aside whatever natural love he might have had for the power of royalty, and established a theocracy, a government of which God was the King and all the people were his subjects. If the thought of self had been uppermost with Moses, it would have been an easy matter for him to follow in the footsteps of all other leaders of his time, to have himself declared king, and, in common with most other rulers of his period, to have himself regarded as a demigod, and demand worship from his subjects. But instead of that, Moses established, for the first time in man's history, the doctrine of liberty and equality.

Abraham, according to the Bible, was the

first to conceive the idea of a spiritual God and to proclaim monotheism in contradistinction to the prevailing belief of polytheism; and Moses was the first to preach this belief to a whole people. It is pointed out that "Jehovah, according to Moses, was not merely the God of Israel; as such he was the God at once of law and justice; the basis, the informing principle, and the implied postulate of their national conscientiousness."

It seems most remarkable that Moses could have taken men, filled with the superstitions they had imbibed while living for hundreds of years in Egypt, rude, ignorant, unlettered, and degraded, and implant in their hearts any conception whatsoever of an unimagined, invisible God. Even the educated and enlightened of the time demanded an imaged and visible God, such as the sun, the moon, or animals; stone or wooden idols, something that they could see or feel. Yet Moses gave his people none of these. They must believe in a spirit which man could not "see and live"; a spirit which is omnipresent, yet beyond the power of the human eye to discern; a spirit which is almighty and yet is never to show itself except by its works; a spirit

which is without form and without body, and yet makes itself felt everywhere. Like the artist who takes the most common stone and produces the highest specimen of sculpture, so Moses took a degraded type of humanity and implanted in their hearts the highest conception of Deity.

His purpose in all this was to teach Israel righteousness. He well knew that righteousness and idolatry can not go hand-in-hand, that few idolaters, if any, were or could be righteous. He knew that the people whom he meant to mold into a nation could not survive, if they led unrighteous lives, and that unless they could be taught to abandon idolatry and become believers in the one and only God, they were destined to perish. How well he succeeded is told by the brilliant German poet Heine, who, speaking of Moses, says:

“He built human pyramids, carved human obelisks; he took a poor shepherd family and created a nation from it, a great, eternal, holy people, a people of God, destined to outlive centuries, and to serve as a pattern to all other nations, even as a prototype to the whole of mankind; he created Israel.”

It is true, as has been pointed out, that thousands of years before Moses was born, the Egyptians had laws against blasphemy, murder, adultery, larceny, perjury, and upon nearly every subject of human interest, but despite their high standard of civilization the Egyptians worshiped their kings as gods, and bowed down before sacred bulls and practised all sorts of abominations.

The spirit of the Pharaohs was one of injustice. Most of the land belonged to the king. The people, at best, were his tenants. At his pleasure he could compel them to perform whatever service he deemed necessary. Human lives to him were no more sacred than the lives of so many flies. Untold millions of hours of unrequited human toil were expended in the building of the pyramids, and in the great piles that were to contain the withered mummies of royalty. The task-masters freely used the whip and the lash on the backs of the unfortunate subjects, who were looked upon as dumb cattle. The whip and the lash became unknown under the government established by Moses. The rights of the humblest Israelite were as much respected as were the rights of Moses himself.



In matters of law there was no wresting of judgment and no respecting of persons. There was manhood suffrage. Duties, rights, and responsibilities were made common to all.

Moses, as a far-seeing statesman, saw that the safety of his people lay in establishing conditions which as far as possible would prevent a king, should they choose to have one, from becoming the absolute owner of the soil, and at the same time prevent the few from becoming land rich and the many from becoming land poor. This prompted the enactment of the law creating the Jubilee Year. In the fiftieth year the land reverted to its original owner or to his heirs. Land monopoly was thus made impossible on the part of the rich or on the part of the ruler. If the agrarian system established by Moses were in force to-day, imagine how impossible would be the conditions, such as prevail in Ireland, cursed as it is with a system of absentee landlordism and farm tenancies. The wretched Irish farmer ekes out a miserable existence, while the idle landlord lives abroad as a man of pleasure on the rentals of the tenants, which literally come from the sweat of their brows. The land system of

Moses would mean no landed millionaires, no landless poor, and no paupers.

The spirit of absolute equality which ruled the mind of Moses is made manifest by the law that the meanest subject should possess a portion of land no larger and no smaller than the greatest in Israel. In this, as in other things, Moses cut himself away from all tradition and from all the influence of his Egyptian training and education. He seemingly made the highest use of his broad and liberal education enjoyed as a member for forty years of the royal household, not in blindly following the footsteps of his educators, but in profiting by his trained powers to observe, to reason, and to think. He clearly saw the evils of the systems by which he had been surrounded and in his own mind worked out the remedies. Now that the opportunity was before him he put them into practise, and the ages since passed have proved his genius as the world's greatest lawmaker and statesman.

That Moses imbibed much from his Egyptian education and environment is, no doubt, true. He had been educated in the House of Seti, the greatest university of his time. He had been

taught by the wisest teachers of the age. He had had at his command the greatest consulting libraries, the library of the Ramesseum of Thebes. He should not have been entitled to be called a great and wise man, had he not made the best and highest use of all that Egyptian civilization and jurisprudence, religion, and morality had to offer. His wisdom, however, was shown in knowing what to avoid and in his power of initiative, the power to devise new laws theretofore unknown or untried: the laws, such as that of a common tenure of land and of the Jubilee Year; the law of equality and liberty; the law of manhood suffrage.

With all his marvelous power as a leader and a statesman, he assumed no titles and asked for no privileges. He did not even ask succession for his son. Joshua, a man of another tribe, is selected by him to be his successor.

The practise of the rulers of his time was to keep the people in densest ignorance in order that they might more readily bear the heavy burdens placed upon them. The hope and aim of Moses were to educate and enlighten his people so that they might become fitted for self-government. It was this desire that led him

to say: "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His spirit upon them." That Moses too was human, and that he had his share of human weaknesses is made plain by the story of his life, as told in the Pentateuch. This makes his achievements seem the more remarkable, and singles him out as the greatest and most lovable man of antiquity. We read how impetuous and impatient he was at times; how at times he lacked in self-possession and self-control; how he was "slow of speech and of a slow tongue," and how he made no pretensions to military generalship nor to the power of a skilled organizer and administrator. It remained for his father-in-law, Jethro, to suggest the appointment of judges over thousands, over hundreds, over fifties, and over tens, so that Moses might be relieved from all detail and thus be enabled to give his time and thought to the greater issues that were to be met and dealt with. And yet, with all these faults, we read how tender, how just, and how merciful he was. It is the men with great passions who, after all, are likely to be the most tender. The men with strong, turbulent spirits which at times roar and rage within

them are they who have the highest sense of gentleness. It is the strong characters who can face the fury of the lion, that also know how to wipe away the tear of the infant—men in whom the extremes meet, in whom passion melts into tenderness, and storm is soothed by gentleness, and wrath meets sympathy, and rage is tempered by mercy. The great are often bundles of paradoxes. Storm is likely to come where gentleness is expected, and tenderness is likely to be exhibited where wrath is looked for. The great are like nature itself, which sends the terrific hail-storm and the gentle dew, the raging tempest and the soft zephyr.

Moses was strong in his wrath, violent in his anger, severe but tender, just but merciful. When on his return from Mount Sinai he found that during his absence of forty days the people had forced Aaron to make for them a golden calf before which they had bowed down and worshiped, his fury knew no bounds. The tablets of the law which were to be the greatest gift to Israel and to the world he cast upon the ground and broke them into many pieces. In his wrath he took the golden calf, burnt it, ground it to a powder, strewed it upon the

waters, and made the people drink of it. He ordered the ringleaders and their followers to be slain, and three thousand were put to death. But his anger subsided, he went before his God and prayed that mercy and forgiveness be meted out to the sinners. He said: "Oh, this people hath sinned a great sin, and they have made themselves gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their sin,—but if not, blot me out, I pray thee, from thy book which thou hast written." The forgiveness of the sins of his people was dearer and closer to him than his own welfare. His first thought was mercy and forgiveness for them, his last thought was for self. So it has been with God's anointed all through the ages.

The truly great are not the Alexanders, the Cæsars, and the Napoleons who did great things and recorded great achievements at frightful cost to humanity; all for self-love, all for selfish ambition; all for their own aggrandizement. The truly great are such as Moses, Jesus of Nazareth, Socrates, Spinoza, Luther, Washington, Lincoln, who had no selfish aims, no thought of selfish power, no itching for material rewards, who lived that others might

be free and who were ever ready to die that others might live.

As James Freeman Clarke points out:

“Tho reared in an Egyptian court under the influence of the Egyptian priesthood, Moses teaches nothing of popular myths, of Osiris, Isis, Horus, and Typhon, nothing of the transmigration of the soul, nothing of the worship of animals, nothing of the future life and judgment to come, nothing of the embalming of bodies and ornamenting of tombs.

“The religion of Egypt is gone, is dead. It was a religion of priests, for priests and by priests. The religion of Moses lives; lives in Judaism, in Christianity, in Mohammedanism. It lives because it is a religion of the people and for the people.”

His wisdom as a statesman stands unequalled. Politically, the government established by Moses was the highest form of free government. The laws were theocratic; there was but one and only King and he was God, the prime Lawmaker whose laws were fixed and not subject to the whims or the arbitrary decrees of the governors. The taxes were likewise fixed, and in no event could be greater than a poll-tax of half a shekel

paid every year at the temple by every adult Jew, and a tenth part of the annual product of the soil for the support of the Levites and the expense of the government. To appreciate the merit of his system, it must be compared with the condition that had existed in Egypt as pointed out in an interesting collection of letters made by a priest who lived in the reign of Rameses II.

The writer of the letters exclaims to some friend whom he is persuading to enter the priestly office for a piece of bread, instead of choosing the profession of a farmer: "Only consider how wretched the condition of the countryman is who spends his life tilling the land. Before he begins to cut his corn, insects destroy part of the crop; multitudes of rats get into his field; then come the locusts. Stray cattle trespass and devour the ripe corn; flocks of small birds attack the sheaves. If he does not make haste and house his harvest, robbers carry it all off. His horse dies of overfatigue in plowing-time. The tax-gatherer arrives at the chief town of the district with a whole army of hungry agents with staves and negroes armed with palm-rods: 'Give us your corn,' is all their cry, and he has no way of escape from their ex-



tortions. By and by the miserable man is seized, bound, and sent off with a gang of other unfortunates to forced work in the canals. His wife is ill used, his children robbed of their clothes, and all this time his neighbors are occupied with their own troubles."

God had seemingly chosen Abraham as His messenger to proclaim the belief in monotheism. He chose Moses to perpetuate this belief and to perform yet another high service to mankind in establishing, as a world's object-lesson, a free government. His knowledge, his inspiration, and his remarkable genius enabled him to do all this in the face of almost insurmountable difficulties.

His forty years at the court of Egypt gave him the mental training needed for so great a work; and the forty years spent as a shepherd on the plains of Midian brought him in contact with nature and enabled him to become familiar with the conditions of the surrounding territory so that he might better know where to lead his people. He needed just such experiences to be able, single-handed and alone, to overcome the characteristics of his people and the physical difficulties of the country over which he traveled.

The spirit which animated him in all his thoughts and in all his acts was the love of righteousness. This was the basis of his government, right-acting and right-living. Governments have since discovered that they can perpetuate themselves only by being built on the rock established by Moses. Every government since established in which righteousness was wanting has crumbled and faded away and has become a part of the dead past. Any government existing to-day, however much it may now flourish, however great may be its cities and mighty its armies and its navies, however great its storehouses, its schools of learning and its academies of arts and sciences, if it be not founded on the rock of righteousness established by Moses, is destined likewise to crumble and fall away.

The greatest man in the time of Moses except Moses himself was Rameses the Great, who gave himself the title of King of kings and Lord of lords, who was the mightiest ruler of his time, and who was worshiped as a god by his subjects. All that is left of him is an inscription on the rocks of Bairevt, in the ruins of Tanis, which tells of his cutting a system of canals from

Memphis to the sea, of building a great wall from Pelusium to Heliopolis, the completing of the celebrated Hall of Columns and of the building of temples and monuments, which time has caused to fall into scattered ruins. His very name is a mere tradition, and for untold centuries has ceased to have the slightest influence on civilization. The monuments left by Moses are the political, sanitary, religious, and ethical laws, engraved on the hearts and minds of humanity, which have influenced for higher, nobler, purer living untold millions of lives that have passed away, and which are destined to continue influencing for good untold millions of lives yet unborn.

If greatness is to be measured by its influence on the life of humanity, by its power for good on the family of mankind, what man in all antiquity, in all history, can compare with the greatness of him who at the same time was prophet and priest, judge and ruler; who taught not only by precept but also by example, and of whom the Bible truly says: "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses whom the Lord knew face to face" (Deut. xxxiv. 10)?



# The Ethics of Moses and its Influence on Present Civilization



## VIII

### THE ETHICS OF MOSES AND ITS INFLUENCE ON PRESENT CIVILIZATION

WHILE Abraham, according to Biblical tradition, was the first to give to the world the conception of a one and only God, Moses stands as the real founder of the Israelitish nation.

The Hebrews had become more or less saturated with the idolatry of Egypt by which, for hundreds of years, they had been surrounded. The belief in a spiritual Godhead taught by Abraham, the father of the Hebrews, had become blunted by Egyptian environment, and in time would doubtless have become deadened, if not entirely lost. The seed of Abraham would most likely have been absorbed by the people of Egypt, and the spreading of the belief in monotheism would thus have been indefinitely postponed. Moses, however, was seemingly chosen to come forward as the deliverer of the Hebrews, to bring them out of the land of bond-

age, to revive the monotheistic belief, and to found the nation of Israel.

Emerson points out that the world admires mostly the qualities of courage, unselfishness, and the power of action. No man can be truly great unless he embodies in a high degree these three qualities.

The world has seen no higher manifestation of courage than that shown by Moses when, as a simple shepherd, without men and without arms, with naught in his hands but a frail shepherd's staff, he appeared before Pharaoh, the greatest ruler and despot of his time, and demanded that he let the Hebrews go. A word from Pharaoh might have cost Moses his liberty, if not his life. Yet utterly indifferent to consequences, he not only demanded the release of the Hebrews, but persisted in this demand until Pharaoh was forced to let them go. We have seen what magnificent courage Moses displayed in placing himself at the head of an untrained, undisciplined horde of freedmen, whose minds by generations of bondage had become stunted and blunted, and who had but a feeble appreciation of freedom and order.

We have seen what splendid powers of action



he manifested in doing all this; in controlling the vast horde of which he was to be guide and protector, and for which he was to find in the wilderness food, shelter, employment, and finally in the land of Canaan, a home.

Is there a parallel to be found for such force of character, such ability, and such power? The Alexanders and Cæsars and Napoleons were men of great courage and great power of action; but these, to aid in their achievements, had behind them the wealth of great nations, as well as highly trained and thoroughly equipped armies. Had these military chieftains been stripped of all their artificial aids and thrown absolutely upon their own resources, as was the case with Moses, in all probability the world would never have heard their names.

Where, in all history, do we find an instance of greater unselfishness than is shown in Moses? The greatness of his mind, the strength of his character made him feared, loved, and respected by his followers. He had no need like Cæsar or Napoleon to wait until a crown was offered him; he was in a position to assume it. The most natural thing, in keeping with the spirit of his time, was to take to himself the power of

kingly ruler and dictator. That he waived this power and remained an unassuming citizen with no greater rights and privileges than the humblest Hebrew, should make plain to us his unprecedented love of democracy and his rare unselfishness. We find then, that, in the highest degree, Moses possessed the three chief essentials to greatness: courage, unselfishness, and the power of action.

It remained for Moses to determine upon what lines he should found the nation of Israel. As the guiding spirit and the ruling intellect, who commanded the respect and the confidence of his people, he was in a position to dictate the policy of the proposed nation, with little or no likelihood of opposition. He might have pursued a policy of might, or of conquest, or of selfish power. But he adopted none of these. In contradistinction to the nations about him he chose to build his nation upon a platform of righteousness. His people were to become a nation of priests, and to be unto the world a religious and moral guide; to teach and to show the way to higher, better, nobler living.

His first important enactment was the immortal Ten Commandments; which establishes

monotheism, provides against the worship of graven images, and for the observance of a weekly day of rest; commands that parents shall be honored; declares against murder, adultery, theft, perjury, and covetousness. Thirty-five hundred years have passed since these commandments were handed down by Moses to Israel. During this long period the world's highest and best, the world's wisest and bravest, the anointed of God have lived. Marvelous progress has been made in all directions—in science, in art, in literature, in statesmanship, and in invention—and yet not one word has been added to or taken from this wonderful code of ethics. It applies as much to the people living under the high civilization of to-day as it did to the poor, homeless, wandering Hebrews standing in fear and in trembling at the base of the mountain and receiving the Decalog amid the thunder and the lightnings of Sinai. These Ten Commandments have had a greater influence upon humanity, have done more to uplift mankind, to bring it nearer to God, to raise man's moral conceptions than any like number of words ever uttered. Take these Ten Commandments from civilization, and the world

would soon drift back into idolatry and paganism with all their abominations. The softening of character, the kindlier, gentler spirit in man would gradually disappear, and in its place would again develop man's innate spirit of selfishness and cruelty. Man, instead of learning to worship God, would once more be taught to worship man, if not creatures lower than man. A few, by virtue of greater mental, moral, or physical power, would once again become the world's masters, and the many would soon again become their helpless dependents, if not their slaves. The possession of a soul would be credited only to the high and the mighty, who would be given a standing before the gods; the rest would be looked upon as worthy of no greater consideration than that given to cattle. They would become mere hewers of wood and drawers of water.

It is true, as already pointed out, that long before the days of Moses there were laws against murder, theft, and perjury, but these were made civil and penal rather than religious and moral laws. Men in violating them were to answer before the human king or his magistrate; under the law of Moses, men were to answer also before the King of kings, the one and only God.

He taught men to fear a spiritual power, which, being all-wise and all-knowing, and which, being able to look into the innermost recesses of the human heart, could not be deceived.

In place of putting his stamp of approval upon slavery, in an age when slavery was a common practise, Moses was the first, so far as we know, who strove to inculcate a love of freedom, and to punish him who preferred bondage. While he knew that to prohibit slavery absolutely at that time was impracticable, he at least endeavored to prohibit it so far as it concerned the children of Israel. While permitting them to have heathen bondmen and bondmaids who should be theirs forever, he forbade permanent slavery among the children of Israel, and ordained that the period of servitude among the Hebrews should be limited to six years. In the seventh year the Hebrew bondman was to go out free for nothing, and if the servant should say, "I love my master, my wife and my children, and I will not go out free," then his master was to bring him unto the judge, and bore his ear through with an awl against a door-post, and he was to serve him till the great Jubilee Year.

On the one hand he held out the promise of prolonged life to him who honored his father and mother, and on the other hand he established the death penalty for him who should smite or curse his father or mother.

There are many who give Jesus of Nazareth the credit for having been the first to utter the precept, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," but nearly fifteen hundred years before the birth of Jesus, Moses had said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and in various places throughout the Pentateuch he makes plain that the word "neighbor" is to be used in the broadest sense. One of his first commandments after the Exodus was that one law should be for the home-born and the stranger: "Thou shalt neither vex a stranger nor oppress him, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."

He still further emphasizes this injunction by saying, "The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you and thou shalt love him as thyself."

He taught his people tolerance. While, on the one hand, he preached the belief in one and only God, he urged upon his people that they do not deride the beliefs of their neighbors. He

said, "Thou shalt not revile the gods." He also endeavored to instil into their hearts and minds a respect for authority, and taught them not to curse the ruler of the people. His love of justice was of the highest. He knew man's natural tendency to be influenced against the rich in favor of the poor, or to be influenced in favor of the poor against the rich, and so he legislated against the respecting of persons. He said, "Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause," and "Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause." "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment. Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty, but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor."

To offset the human tendency of taking advantage of an enemy's misfortune, he said: "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again."

"If thou see the ass of him that hate thee lying under his burden and wouldst forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him."

So far as we know, a weekly day of rest for man and cattle had not been set aside by any

other people. If Moses had achieved nothing more than to give to the toiling masses and the beasts of burden one day's rest out of every seven, this in itself would entitle him to the everlasting gratitude of mankind.

Moses placed a high premium upon chastity and sexual purity. He had seen the frightful results of lust and licentiousness as practised by other nations, and he taught the highest purity and cleanliness. In speaking of sexual immorality he said: "Defile not ye, yourselves, in any of these things, for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you." "That the lands spurn not you out also when ye defile it, as it spurned out the nations that were before you." "For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people."

Not least among the laws established by Moses was the one of charity and generosity: "When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of the field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest." "And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of



thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and strangers."

The spirit of Mosaic charity aimed to avoid needless humiliation to the poor, who, unknown and unseen, were permitted to come after dark to reap the corners of the field and to glean the vineyard. His love for the poor is yet further shown when he said: "If thy brother be waxen poor and fallen in decay with thee, then thou shalt relieve him, yea, tho he be a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with thee." "Take thou no usury of him or increase, nor lend him thy victuals for increase." "When thou dost lend thy brother anything thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge." "Thou shalt stand abroad and the man to whom thou lendest shall bring out the pledge abroad unto thee, and if the man be poor thou shalt not sleep with his pledge."

"In any case, thou shalt deliver him again the pledge when the sun goes down that he may sleep in his own raiment."

"Thou shalt not oppress the hired servant that is poor and needy whether he be of thy brethren or of thy strangers that are in the land within thy gates."

“At the close of his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it for he is poor and setteth his heart before it.”

“Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless.”

The poor and the helpless were ever close to the heart of Moses. He said: “The wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.”

“Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind.”

He abominated tale-bearing, back-biting, and revenge. He said: “Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people, neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbor.”

“Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart.”

“Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people.”

Not only did Moses preach morality for the house of worship and for the home, but also for the market-place. He said: “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure.”

“Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin shall ye have.”

Imagine how high would be the standard of trade if these injunctions were faithfully followed by all engaged therein.

When we remember that in the Orient even in this day, innocent men are punished for the crime committed by their relatives, we can better appreciate the keen sense of justice which prompted Moses to say: “The fathers shall not be put to death for the children; neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers; every man shall be put to death for his own sins.”

He was not a believer in vicarious atonement. He emphasized personal responsibility, and taught his people to feel that if they committed sins, no other being could save them from just punishment.

His sympathy was not confined to the human family; it extended to the brute creation. He said: “Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.”

It is these ethical laws of Moses as well as innumerable other ordinances which gave their inspiration to all the prophets of Israel, who followed Moses.

It was the utterances of Moses which made the Psalms of David and the proverbs of Solomon possible. It was his inspired ideals that gave food to minds such as Isaiah and Ezra, Nehemiah, Jeremiah, and Micah.

It was the spirit of Moses which gave to the world such great moral teachers as Shamai and Hillel, the contemporaries of Jesus, and that made possible the host of commentators who have given to the world the Talmud, and the remainder of the great Judaic literature. It was the teachings of Moses that made a Jesus and a Paul possible, and that furnished them with a fountain of truth from which they drank most copiously.

Jesus possessed great originality, but, as has been repeatedly shown, it was originality of phraseology, the power to present old truths in new forms, the rare ability to set forth the teachings of Moses and his followers in simple and telling words that burn themselves into the hearts of humanity.

If we take out of the Bible the five books of Moses, the rest falls, as a great structure would fall should its foundation be removed.

Not only did Moses furnish the inspiration

for all the other prophets in Israel, and for the founders and teachers of Christianity, but also for Mohammed and Mohammedism, that are likewise based upon the God of Israel and the law proclaimed by Moses. We who are living thirty-five hundred years after the birth of Moses are as deeply indebted to him for our ethics and for our religion as were the children of Israel who, under his guidance, crossed the Red Sea. It is safe to declare that spiritually, ethically, religiously, and judicially, Moses was not only the greatest man of antiquity, but the greatest man of all time.

That he was not perfect is but an evidence of his humaneness. That some of the laws and the judgments enacted by Moses, such as the condoning of the perpetual enslavement of the heathen, the killing of the wives, and the male children of the enemy, will not stand in a court of ethics of to-day is true; but we must remember the time in which he lived and the conditions by which he was surrounded. The wonder is not that he failed to see some things as we see them to-day; the marvel is that his conception should have been ages and ages in advance of all others who lived in his time, that

he should have been able to establish laws moral, sanitary, political, and religious, which have stood the test of all the succeeding centuries.

The question has been asked how the spirit of righteousness claimed for Moses can be reconciled with the statement in Exodus which reads: "And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver and jewels of gold and raiment; and the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians so that they lent unto them such things as they required and they spoiled the Egyptians."

It surely was not righteous to borrow with the knowledge in their minds that they did not intend to make return. This would not only involve the sin of robbery but also those of falsehood and deception. How a literal believer in the Bible can explain this flagrant wrong-doing by the advice of Moses and in the name of God, I do not know. Taking the Bible as I do, rationally, I should say that either the Israelites forcibly despoiled the Egyptians to compensate themselves for many years of unrequited toil, or that the Egyptians suffering, as they were, from frightful calamities and plagues, which they

were led to believe were brought about by their refusal to let the Hebrews go, now became only too anxious to hasten their departure, and offered them gold and jewels to accelerate their movements. The story of the exodus from Egypt being at best a tradition handed down orally for several hundred years before it was reduced to writing, is surrounded by so much myth and legend that, so far as the facts are concerned, only surmises and opinions can be offered.

Moses has had many successors who have done heroic work for humanity. Mohammed, inspired by the teachings of Moses, stands out as one of the world's great moral and religious heroes in having won over from paganism and heathenism even more followers to monotheism, and to the abolition of the vile practises of idolatry than has Christianity.

Take, however, out of the Koran the law of Moses, and the rest has no foundation; and the host of Mohammedans would soon fall back into paganism, and once again find themselves steeped in all its vices and abominations.

Jesus of Nazareth, filled with the beauty and the simplicity of the teachings of Moses, earnestly striving to live them in his daily life, ani-

mated with the burning desire to tear away the swaddling-clothes placed around them by rabbinism, by which they were being smothered; held them up high and clear and clothed them in new, fresh, telling words, which gave them a renewed lease of life that vastly spread their influence.

The genius of Jesus did not lie in giving the world new thoughts, new moral conceptions, or new ideals. Every moral sentiment attributed to Jesus is to be found either in the Old Testament, among the sayings attributed to Moses, or among the utterances of the prophets who taught and preached the law of Moses, and who were filled with the spirit of the great lawgiver, or among the writings of the great Jewish commentators as handed down in the Talmud. This in no wise should lessen our admiration for the achievements of the Nazarene. His is the credit for having so filled the hearts of his followers with the beauty and the glory of the God of Israel preached by Moses, and with the goodness and the purity of the teachings of the great lawgiver, that he created a great spiritual revival which has since swept over the civilized world and tremendously affected for good the welfare of humanity.



Jesus taught humility and kindness, love and charity, mercy and justice, meekness and righteousness. In so doing he simply took up the thread dropped by Moses and carried on the work laid out by his great predecessor. It matters much to the world that Moses lived to compile the moral laws, and that Jesus lived to preach and to emphasize them. It matters little to the world as to which is entitled to greater honor. It may please the race pride of the Jew to claim that Moses, the father of the moral law, was the founder of Israel and hence entitled to the greater honor for its achievements; and it may please the sectarian pride of the Christian to hold that Jesus is entitled to the greater honor for having popularized and universalized the moral teachings of Moses. But what difference can it make to humanity which of the two great characters is entitled to the greater honor so long as the world is permitted to enjoy the benefit of their joint labors? What difference can it make to the world whether a man who spelt his name Shakespeare or Bacon wrote the works attributed to Shakespeare, or whether they were written by a man who spelt his name Smith? Sufficient that the world is permitted

to enjoy and to profit by the wonderful brains that produced the divine comedies and the great tragedies that have been a source of inspiration and delight to countless generations. The world is not particularly interested in names, but in principles and in results. And so, let Jew and Christian, if they so desire, gratify themselves with their respective claims for Moses or Jesus, so long as we are permitted to reap the blessings which have come from the work of both great teachers.

It is true that we who are living to-day can not hope to improve upon the ethics laid down by Moses and taught by Jesus and Mohammed. The great lawgiver was thoroughly exhaustive in his work and left no room for the naming of an eleventh commandment. But there still remains great and important work to do. The first of these is to practise faithfully and conscientiously the moral laws of Moses.

How few observe all the ten commandments, even one day in the year! How rare the man of whom it can be said that in his daily life he faithfully carries out every injunction in the Decalog!

The next is to do our fullest share, by word

and deed, in spreading a knowledge of the ethics of Moses; by giving our earnest support to church, school, and home, all of which are built upon the teachings of Moses. And lastly, we may do important work by striving earnestly to correct error and superstition, which are founded on ignorance, and by helping to spread a knowledge of righteousness, so that the blessings which flow from the practise of morality may become common blessings and may be inherited by all the children of God.

The tablets of stone upon which were engraven the divine laws of Moses may be imperishable and yet avail nothing, unless we obey these divine laws, fill ourselves with their spirit, breathe them into every act of our daily lives, and transmit the influence of their spirit to those about us, until all men shall learn to live pure and righteous lives and to love their neighbors as themselves.

Then will the ethics of Moses have served its highest, noblest purpose; then shall we deserve that it be said of us, "Good and faithful servant, thy duty has been nobly done"



## **“The Jewish Idea of God”**



## IX

### "THE JEWISH IDEA OF GOD"

THE chief distinction between the brute and man lies in the capacity of the latter to conceive the spiritual in nature. The capacity to form such a conception is not confined merely to the highly civilized, but is found even amongst the lower types of humanity.

The savage believes in a great spirit to which he ascribes wonderful, superhuman powers. The idolater attributes great power and wisdom to the image of stone or wood, before which he bows in reverence and awe. The heathen, who offers sacrifices before his gods, looks upon them as being able to perform great and mighty deeds far beyond the power of man. Go where you will and you find man filled with awe and superstition, which lead him to think that there exists somewhere a spiritual power transcending his own. He feels that he is surrounded by mysteries which are beyond his ability to solve or explain.

Some one has truly said that "Man has created God in his own image." So it has been, and so it will probably continue to be to the end of time.

Xenophanes says that if horses, oxen, and lions could paint or model, they would certainly make gods in their own image: horses in the form of horses, oxen in the form of oxen, and lions in the form of their own. The Indian imagines the great spirit which he worships to be the possessor of a huge tomahawk having the power to annihilate untold numbers of the enemy with one stroke. The idolater builds his stone or wooden images into grotesque specimens of his own type, and trembles with inexpressible fear in the sight of the dumb and lifeless creatures of his own handiwork. The heathen forms in his imagination a god after his own making, endowed with every quality to which he aspires, and identifies it with every element in nature which he dreads.

The vast majority of the human race still give to their god or gods a human form and human attributes.

The heathen will tell you that his gods love and hate, eat and drink, quarrel and fight, and



that they are actuated by much the same hopes and fears as are men of earth, earthy. The idolater can not conceive of a spiritual power that is without form and without body, a power that, tho unseen, is all-seeing; a power that, so far as the human eye can see, is nowhere, yet is omnipresent; that, seemingly manifesting no might, is nevertheless almighty; that, tho unknowable, is all-knowing.

Research shows that long before Abraham's time there were minds sufficiently advanced to conceive of a spiritual God, “whose thoughts are not man's thoughts, and whose ways are not man's ways.” But according to the traditions, Abraham was the first to conceive of God as One; divest him of human qualities; clothe him with spirituality; conceive him as absolutely just, yet all-merciful; absolutely loving, yet all-just; the first to look upon him as the Father, not of a tribe nor of a race, nor of a particular people, but of the human family; who knows no distinction among humankind, who showers his blessings on all his creatures alike; a Father whose every child must pay the penalty for the transgression of his law.

A legend is told that Terah, the father of

Abraham, who was a maker of and a dealer in idols, having occasion to go on a journey, placed his idols in the care of Abraham, with instructions to see that no harm befell them. During his absence Abraham hammered the idols to pieces, leaving only the smallest and most insignificant, in whose hands he placed the weapon of destruction. On his return, Terah was staggered to find his valuable stock of idols in ruins, and demanded an explanation.

"During the dark hours of the night," said Abraham, "that vicious little idol, prompted no doubt by jealousy, arose and with the weapon you see in his hands utterly demolished all the other idols."

"Out upon you," cried the enraged father, "why this wicked lie? Is it not enough that in your folly you have brought ruin upon me by your impious conduct? How could this lifeless and helpless bit of clay lift its hand and work the havoc which I see about me?"

"If your idols have eyes and see not, and ears and hear not, and hands and work not, why do you bow down and worship them?" asked Abraham. "Is it not plain that such worship is vain and useless, and that it must prove a delu-

sion and a snare?” And thereupon Abraham laid bare to his father the thoughts he had conceived of an almighty and all-powerful God, not made by human hands nor seen by human eyes. So eloquent and convincing were the words of Abraham that Terah embraced the faith of his son. Fearing the wrath of his neighbors when it should become known that he was no longer a believer in the popular gods, Terah gathered his family and his possessions, and went forth to seek a home in new and foreign lands.

Thus, according to traditions, Abraham gave expression to the highest conception of God that the human mind has been able to conceive; a conception which has stood the test of ages and sages. No one since Abraham's time has advanced any idea of God more beautiful, more sublime, or more in accord with reason.

Herbert Spencer, regarded by many as the greatest living scientist and philosopher, speaks of God as the “First Cause,” which is but another name for the Author of the universe. He says: “Certain conclusions respecting the nature of the universe seem unavoidable. In our search after causes, we discover no resting-place

until we arrive at a First Cause, and we have no alternative but to regard this First Cause as infinite and absolute."

The mind of man is constantly struggling against the tendency to give to God a human form and human attributes. Even among the Jews, whose conception of God is the most spiritual and the most lofty, we find some who are not able to grasp the thought that God is a spirit. We find many who picture him much the same as he was portrayed by medieval Christian artists, whose works are still to be found in many churches in Italy, and in which he is made to appear as a white-haired, long-bearded old man, with three fingers raised on high, handing the law to Moses; or, as a converted Chinaman recently pictured him to me, as a great, old man who sits on the edge of a cloud, and who is possessed of eyes, ears, mouth, tongue, teeth, and stomach; despite the fact, according to the Chinaman's own conception, that God neither eats nor drinks, and hence can have no use for teeth or stomach.

There are many Jews who have God in mind as a white-bearded patriarch, who sits on a great throne of justice in the high heavens, with Abra-

ham on one side and Moses on the other, and who, on the day of judgment, having his great book spread out before him, acts as his own recording angel and writes down therein who is to live and who is to die, who shall enjoy health and prosperity, and who shall meet with sickness and adversity. Thus they anthropomorphize, *i.e.*, give to God a human form.

The minds of many men are no higher than those of grown children. The spiritual character of God is as difficult for them to grasp as it was for the little five-year-old American boy who asked his father whether God was at that moment in the room. On being answered “Yes,” he further asked, “And is he also at this very minute in China?” “Yes, my son,” replied the parent. “Oh,” said the little fellow, “what dreadful long legs God must have!”

It is only as the mind grows and advances that it can conceive of a spirit without human form and without human attributes. It is only the mind, trained and guided by reason, which can understand that to give to God hands and feet, teeth and stomach; that to attribute to him the passions of hate, love, and revenge, is to belittle him, to make of him a creature who can

be beguiled by tears and influenced by prayers, who can be moved by sorrowful petitions and flattery to grant favors, and who will inflict punishment for real or fancied human slights. Human hearts filled with such conceptions of God can not be truly righteous nor truly unselfish. If what they regard as reasonable requests of God are not granted, if they are visited by misfortune and suffering, they are apt to look upon God as unjust and unmerciful, and thus lose all faith in him; they are likely to feel either that there is no God or that his laws are unjust, and that therefore he is unworthy of adoration.

To rise above this narrow, low, sordid, petty, and selfish conception of God, requires the power to understand that an all-just and all-wise God must establish laws that are universal; that such laws must be unchangeable and universally binding; that they must bless alike all who obey them and punish alike all who transgress them; that ignorance of his laws can in no wise lessen such punishment; and that the true road to happiness lies in finding out God's laws and in observing them. The higher minds among men have long since realized all this, and have ever earnestly striven to search out the truth,

which is but another name for the laws of God. They have felt that he is the greatest benefactor of the human family who can search out God's laws and impart a knowledge of them to his fellows. It is for this reason that the religious teacher and preacher have ever commanded a high place in the esteem and affection of men.

As a rule, in the thought of Socrates, ignorance is the mother of vice and wisdom the mother of goodness. The ignorant are sometimes good and the learned are sometimes wicked; but these, I think, are exceptions. In the majority of cases ignorance and vice go hand-in-hand, and so do learning and goodness. Solomon with all his supposed wisdom was really not wise. He was called wise in an unwise age. Had he been truly wise he would have been less sinful, and would have saved himself and his people much misery and misfortune. He would have made the magnificent rule inaugurated by his father David more permanent, and would not have sown the seeds of subsequent national dissension and disintegration.

The truly wise man searches after happiness through the laws of God. He knows that ignorance of God's laws or the wilful violation of

them must inevitably bring in its train sorrow and suffering, pain and anguish. As a wise man he seeks, therefore, to learn God's laws and faithfully to obey them. As a lover of his fellows, he seeks not only to do this for his own good, but for their good as well. As a lover of man, he seeks to spread as widely as possible what he believes to be the true laws of God. Such labor is the highest form of benefaction, and is greater and of more lasting value than any gift of gold.

Human wickedness or nature's destructive elements may take away or destroy material gifts, but the spiritual bequests of the wise are as permanent as the guiding stars above. Diogenes, who lived in a tub, felt himself happier and doubtless was happier than the mighty Alexander, who, when asking the philosopher what gifts he might bestow upon him, was told to get out of the way of the sun so as not to obstruct the light showered down from above. The possession of wisdom and virtue made Diogenes much happier and more contented than Alexander ever was, altho he had all the world at his feet.

The higher mind realizes that God, while all-



knowing and all-seeing, nevertheless does not meddle in the petty affairs of men nor endeavor to adjust their differences. He has established for all alike wise, just, and immutable laws. He has blest man with reason, with the power to see, to hear, to think, and to remember; and he leaves it to man, by the exercise of these gifts, to seek out these laws and to learn that his happiness depends on living in accord with them. Man has long since discovered how much wiser it is that he must seek and find, rather than that without effort on his part he shall be made to know the laws of God. He has discovered that the highest and best within him is brought out in his search after a knowledge of God; that he grows nobler, better, stronger, and wiser in overcoming difficulties and in wiping out ignorance; that God has ordained that pleasure may come from pain, joy from sorrow, peace through war, rest through toil, and happiness through suffering.

Man has learnt that there must be evil in the world as well as good; that there must be sin in the world as well as righteousness, and that happiness is the result of overcoming evil and conquering sin; that the noblest, happiest, and

highest type of man is not he who knows no evil and has never sinned, but he who having sinned seeks to avoid sin in the future, and knowing evil seeks to conquer his desire to do evil and live righteously.

The wise and rational man who has learned to know God and has become imbued with his justice and wisdom does not look upon pain or sorrow, misfortune or war, toil or suffering, as punishments from God, but rather as a means to an end, as experiences that are necessary to lead men in search of the true path of life. He has learned to know that afflictions are the fiery furnace through which he must pass in order that he may come out strengthened and purified.

He who worships God in human form is neither Jew, nor Christian, nor Mohammedan. If a man worships in this fashion he must deteriorate and degenerate. He who worships God in human form worships human imperfections and human weaknesses. It was such worship that gave rise to the doctrine of the divine right of kings and the other doctrine that "The king can do no wrong"; doctrines that worked much mischief in the past.

The example set by wicked and vicious rulers, who were slaves of unholy passions and base instincts, led untold numbers of their subjects and abject worshipers to practise the same abominations and become the victims of the same sins and vices, all in the belief that that which could not be wrong in him before whom they bowed down and worshiped could not be wrong in them. Thus does man-worship lead to idol-worship and to all the degeneracy inseparable from idolatry.

The Jewish idea of God, the idea that God's thoughts are higher than man's thoughts and God's ways than man's ways, has uplifted the Jew and has led him away from man-worship and idolatry. The Jewish idea of God in the course of the ages has appealed to the world's best and highest intellects, and has done heroic service in ennobling the human family. The late Rabbi I. M. Wise most truly said that in twenty-five, or at most in fifty, years the rational world would believe with the rational Jew. Already, if not long since, rational men have cast aside the anthropomorphic conception of a God having human form and human attributes, and have accepted the idea of the rational Jew.

Not until all the world shall have become rational, and all men, wherever they may worship, shall know with the Jew that God is eternal, and thus always did exist and always shall exist; that he is immutable, and thus never changes; that he is incorporeal, and thus possesses no bodily form; that he is omniscient, and thus knows all; that he is omnipresent, and thus is everywhere; that he is omnipotent, and hence possesses all power, will the task of the Jew be complete.

In presenting the Jewish idea of God, I have given nothing new. It is the view not only of the modern Jew, but also of ancient Judaism. In every orthodox synagog throughout the world the Yigdal prayer, based on the teachings of Moses Maimonides of the thirteenth century, is a part of the common ritual, and is recited by the Jews the world over. This prayer describes God in the following language:

"Extolled be the living God and praised!  
He existeth, but his existence is not bounded by time.

"He is one, but there is no unity like unto his unity. He is incomprehensible and his unity is unending.

"He hath no material form; he is incorporeal; and naught that is can be compared to him in holiness.

"He existed before all created things; he is first, there is no beginning to his existence.

"He beholdeth and knoweth our secret things; for he vieweth the end of a thing at its commencement."

When the great human family shall know, feel, and believe this, this Jewish idea of God and the Jewish mission will be fully realized. Meanwhile, tho it should be everybody's mission to spread the true idea of God, it is the mission of the Jew especially to teach and to preach this lofty conception. It is especially his mission so to live that his every-day life may be an object-lesson of the uplifting influence that the right idea of God must have upon human conduct and human endeavor. It is especially his mission to show that God does not stand for fear, but for love; that the mission of the Jewish religion is to bring into the world righteousness; that the laws of God, however stern and severe they may seem to the ignorant and to the unthinking, are wise and beneficent and tend to uplift man so that he may assume

the image of God, not in form but in spirit, in lofty aspirations and high and exalted ideals.

The Jew who fully understands Israel's idea of God, who fully understands that “Judaism is a religion of integrity of heart and innocence of hands,” that “the essential character of Israel's Eternal is to love the thing that is right, to abhor that which is evil,” strives, in the language of a modern writer, “To do that which deserves to be written, to write that which deserves to be read, to tend the sick, to comfort the sorrowful, to animate the weary, to keep the temple of the body pure, to cherish the divinity within us, to be faithful to the intellect, to educate those powers which have been entrusted to our charge, and to employ them in the service of humanity.”

# The Jew in Commerce





## X

### THE JEW IN COMMERCE

THE following is the description given by Josephus, the Jewish historian, who lived shortly after Jesus, of Jewish life in his time:

“As for ourselves, we neither inhabit a maritime country, nor do we delight in merchandise nor in such a mixture with other men as arises from it; but the cities we dwell in are remote from the sea, and, having a fruitful country for our habitation, we take pains to cultivate that only. Our principal care is this—to educate our children well, and we think it to be the more necessary business of our whole life to observe the laws that have been given us and to keep those rules of piety that have been delivered down to us.”

Had Josephus been told that the Jews were to become a race of buyers and sellers, that in the ages to follow they would be found in every part of the globe engaged in trade, it would

have seemed as improbable to him as it would seem to us, were we told that in future ages the Jews would again become exclusively an agricultural people, and the counting-house would be abandoned for the field, the shop for the plow, the yard-stick for the pruning-shears.

For many hundreds of years before the Christian era the Jew lived as a cultivator of the soil. When not called upon to take up arms in defense of his country, his was the peaceful life of the husbandman. Barter and trade he left to more enterprising neighbors, and such wants as his own soil did not satisfy were supplied by foreign merchants. In no other period in the world's history did a people come so near the ideal condition sought for by modern political economists as did the Jews during their life as a nation. Neither the pauper nor the millionaire found a home in Palestine. The people were thrifty and prosperous, neither rich nor poor.

The land of Canaan, after the return from Egypt, was divided among the tribes of Israel and then subdivided among families and thus held in small parcels. The law, which compelled the return of the land to the original

owner or his heirs at the end of each fifty years, prevented alike large estates and a landless poor, and perpetuated the existence of a thrifty yeomanry.

To trace out the causes which led this race of plowmen to become a race of traders is to go through those pages of history during the last eighteen hundred years which are filled with records of all that is damnable and atrocious. It is to journey through historical chapters reeking with hatred and cruelty, with bigotry and despotism, with crime and oppression. It is to review the passages of history that tell of the horrors of the inquisition, the tortures of the inhuman rack and the thumb-screw, the painful death at the burning stake.

It is to the Cæsars of Rome that the Jew is chiefly indebted for his change of condition. Had it not been for the Roman conquerors, the Jew might have remained unknown in the marts of the world.

For nearly a hundred years did the Jewish nation, the smallest among the peoples of the earth, hold the mighty empire of Rome in check—an empire that was wont to sweep all before it, an empire whose mighty military

genius had crushed the most powerful nations and forced them to bend the knee in humble submission to the Cæsars.

When Judea, the smallest but the most fearless and most courageous of all the nations, as the result of internal dissensions, was finally overcome by force of numbers; when all that was left of Jerusalem was a heap of ruins, when the savage soldier of Rome was steeped to his neck in Jewish blood, when the Jewish bodies of the young and the innocent, the old and the decrepit lay piled up in great heaps, and when the wanton and inhuman destruction of the helpless and the defenseless ceased only because of sheer physical exhaustion on the part of the victors, there arose a shout of joy among the Roman horde that was heard in the remotest corners of their vast empire; a shout of joy that might have been expected had the conquered been the greatest instead of the smallest nation; a shout of joy such as had not been heard in Rome even when its mightiest enemies had been vanquished. So great was this event accounted to be, that the victory over Judea was celebrated by the erection of a magnificent triumphal arch. So greatly did the Cæsars fear the

indomitable spirit of Jewish independence that they determined to crush and extirpate the entire Hebraic race. Accordingly, the Jews were dispersed throughout the empire never more to be reunited as a nation. The severest and harshest laws were enacted against them. They were forbidden to read their Bible or to transmit their traditions; they were subjected to the most humiliating, menial labors; thousands were sold into slavery and many thousands more were used for the entertainment of the bloodthirsty populace in the arena by being pitted against famishing and ferocious beasts. And so, bereft of home, of country, of liberty, and of all that was dear to him except the religion of his fathers, the faith of monotheism, which in spite of the efforts of his conquerors he could inwardly still retain, the Jew ended his career as a tiller of the soil. Bereft of the privilege of becoming an owner of land, of the privilege of following the plow, of the privilege of entering the professions, or even of becoming an artisan, he was forced, as a mark of degradation, against all his inclinations, against all the habits of his national life, to become a hawker and a petty trader, and thus began what has since proved to

be the most brilliant commercial development in the world's history.

Little did the Roman conqueror or Roman statesman know the powers of the Jew or the destiny that he had been chosen to fulfil. Little did Rome dream that long after its vast empire should be a thing of the past, long after its brilliant victories should be merely fading remembrances, long after its material greatness should be crumbled into dust, the Jew would live and thrive, and still be a potent factor in the most important affairs of the civilized world.

Nor do we find that the Jew was kept degraded only while under the heel of Roman emperors. This was but the beginning. His woes, his sufferings, and his degradation were still further increased when church became greater than state, and when, under the guise of holy zeal, there were added all the religious cruelties, all the exquisite physical tortures that the human mind could devise. That such cruelties as were perpetrated against a defenseless people could be permitted to go on for nearly eighteen hundred years seems almost incredible, and but shows how the human mind can become warped and human senses blunted.

Let us, while at this point, listen to what Martin Luther has to say concerning the treatment of the Jews: "We should set fire to their synagogs and schools, and what can not be burned should be covered over with earth, that no man may ever discover a stone or brick of it—we are to do this for the glory of our Lord and Christianity. Burn all their houses and lodge them in stables like gypsies, in order that they may know they are not lords in this land, but in captivity and misery. Burn all their prayer-books and Talmuds, forbid the rabbis under pain of death to give instructions, deny Jews the right of protection on the highways, for they have no business with the land. Being neither lords, farmers, nor merchants, nor anything of the kind, they are to remain at home; you lords shall not and can not protect them, unless you would take part in their abomination. Put a flail, ax, mattock, or spindle in the hands of every young and strong Jew or Jewess and compel them to manual labor."

If such were the sentiments of a man foremost among the reformers of his time, what was the Jew to expect from others less enlightened and still more savage in their disposition?

What other race that the world has ever known could have outlived conditions such as these? What other race starting in commerce where the Jew started, in spite of being despised, hated, plundered, persecuted, and cheated, could become foremost among the civilized nations as a race of financiers and merchants?

But what of the vices of the Jew which, it is claimed, instigated his oppressors? True it is that the Jew developed the vices of the trader and money-lender—vices that were foreign to him when living as a nation in Judea; but instead of being accredited to their proper cause, these vices have wrongfully been labeled Jewish vices.

The wonder is not that the Jew has vices, but that he has so few of them. What other race under the canopy of heaven has undergone a tithe of the sufferings and persecutions imposed upon the Jew and has retained so many virtues?

The history of the Jew makes it plain that he has been blessed not alone with talent, but with that much higher and rarer quality—genius. The genius that enabled Abraham, reared in and surrounded as he was by an atmosphere of



idolatry, to conceive the idea of the oneness and the spirituality of God; the genius that enabled Moses to give to the world the matchless code of morals embraced in the Ten Commandments; the genius that enabled the prophets in Israel to give us that great Book of books—the Bible; the genius that made it possible for a nomadic and pastoral race to transform Palestine into a veritable garden, to make the vine, the fig and the olive thrive where they had never grown before; the genius that, through Jesus and Paul, could give the world the magnificent moral and spiritual results achieved through Christianity; the genius that enabled the smallest among the peoples to resist time and again the most mighty among nations—this same genius, when forced into action by barter and trade, aided the Jew to advance himself from the pawnshop to the banking-house, from the pedler's pack to the helm of commerce.

Were it possible to arrive at the amount of Jewish capital to be found in the United States alone, and were it possible to compute the annual amount of business transacted by the Jews of America in banking and commercial circles, the results, considering that as a rule the Jew

has come to this country penniless and unknown, would be most astounding.

Were we to add to this his commercial activity throughout the world, we should find it to be the most extraordinary showing ever made by so limited a number of people in the history of civilization.

To what are we to attribute this most remarkable success? How is this wonderful growth to be explained? Can it be that the Jew possesses some mystic power that enables him to escape the hazards, the difficulties, and the dangers of commercialism? Can it be that he has found some easy road to success, some path where obstacles are not to be encountered, where difficulties melt away and where success may be grasped by the simple outstretching of the arm? Quite the contrary. No people ever met with more difficulties, no people has had a harder road, than has the Jew, on which to journey toward commercial achievement. His was not the smoothest, but rather the thorniest highway to success. The remarkable progress of the Jew in commerce is, after all, easily explained. It lies simply in that he has followed the precept of that old philosopher who said that "the

ladder of success, of fortune, is composed of six steps: faith, industry, perseverance, temperance, probity, and independence." The unscrupulous and the dishonest, the crafty and the knavish, may by fraud, by deceit, or by unfair means succeed for a time; but no individual, no race, no nation can hope for lasting success without a foundation of these six virtues; and it is to the constant practise of these six virtues that the Jew owes whatever material success he now enjoys.

But the value to the world of a race or a nation is not to be judged by its material success, nor by its wealth, nor by its power. These are not the highest qualities to be sought for. These are not the qualities that in themselves make men better or nobler. These qualities are apt to make men grasping, avaricious, selfish, and despotic.

It is by moral and intellectual worth that races, as well as individuals, are to be judged. It is what they do for others rather than what they do for themselves that is to determine whether they are of benefit to the world.

§ Let us therefore examine into the more recent history of the Jew, with a view of learning to

what use he has applied his wealth and his genius. Let us inquire whether his faculties have been confined to money-getting alone and whether his money has been used only to gratify selfish tastes and desires.

Go with me where you will in the New World, or in the Old, wherever the Jew is found in thriving numbers, and there you will find Jewish orphan asylums, free schools, hospitals, homes for the aged and the infirm, and like institutions erected and supported by Jewish wealth and Jewish benevolence. Nor are the benefits of these institutions, as a rule, confined to the Jew alone; all humanity, regardless of race, color, or creed, are welcomed and treated with kindness and consideration.

It was estimated, so far as ten years ago, by Leo N. Levi, a Hebrew statistician of this country, who has taken great pains carefully to compile the figures, that the Jews of the United States alone expend annually \$1,300,000 in strictly Hebrew charities, and half as much again in general charities, making a grand total outlay of nearly \$2,000,000 per annum. Proportionate philanthropic expenditures by the people at large would foot up to \$154,000,000 per annum.

Nor are the Jews of the Old World less benevolent in their practises. Such men as Baron Hirsch, the Rothschilds, and the Montefiores, who won for themselves world-wide reputations for their beneficence, are but the foremost among an army of wealthy and zealous Jewish philanthropists whose annual expenditures in the cause of benevolence and education equal any sum expended anywhere on the globe by a like number of equally wealthy persons.

As to how the Jew employs his mental powers, we need but look among the professions in all countries where he has been permitted to acquire an education to find him ranking among the foremost in medicine, in law, in music, in the arts, in the sciences, and in statesmanship.

The intellectual growth and attainments of the Jew in this country are not less remarkable than elsewhere in the world. It is here that we find the sons of Jewish emigrants who, a little more than a generation ago, landed on these shores penniless and unknown, occupying chairs in our universities as doctors of philosophy and professors of political economy.

There is scarcely an institute of learning, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, that does not number

among its members some sons of Israel who, for intellect and culture, compare most favorably with the ablest among their fellow students. Strange indeed would it be were it otherwise. Strange, indeed, would it be, if the descendants of a race that in the intellectual history of the world ranks among the foremost, a race that was absorbed in the highest questions of philosophy and wisdom, while what are now known as the civilized nations were yet enveloped in darkness,—it were strange indeed if the descendants of such a race should have lost that mental power, that intellectual genius, that divine spark that gave the world its Moses, its Isaiah, its David, its Solomon, its Hillel, its Jesus, its Paul.

When we look back to the dark and dreary days in the history of the Jew, when we recall the repeated and almost superhuman efforts of mighty rulers and emperors to annihilate the Jew and blot out his influence, when we remember that by the simple renouncing of an idea he might have been saved from ages of agonizing mental and physical suffering, and when we see that in spite of all the heavy burdens he was forced to carry, in spite of all the hatred to which he was subjected, in spite of all the kicks and

curses inflicted upon him, in spite of the rack, the thumb-screw, the dungeon, the torch and the stake, he still lives and thrives and progresses, we are forced to the conclusion that his is a mission not yet fulfilled. We are forced to the conclusion that he has been preserved to carry out a design that is to be of benefit to all mankind.

In looking over the past, how clearly do we now see the wisdom manifested by a higher Power in destroying Israel as a nation, and in scattering the people of Judea broadcast throughout the world.

Confined to the narrow limits of Palestine, quietly pursuing the peaceful vocation of husbandry, the Jew might not have permitted to perish the divine thought which he was the first to proclaim, the sublime idea of the oneness of God; but it would have taken endless ages for that idea to become generally accepted, it would have taken hundreds of centuries to accomplish in that direction even as much as has been brought about during the past eighteen hundred years.

The destruction of Jerusalem, the dispersion of its people, did much to keep alive and to

spread the monotheistic belief of the Jew. Being driven from his vocation of tilling the soil and forced into the new and unwelcome channel of barter and trade, he was by that alone compelled to become a traveler and a wanderer, and thus is the picture brought vividly before us of the homeless and friendless Jew wandering from land to land, staggering under the heavy burden of the pedler's pack, nervously clutching to his breast his hidden Bible, made doubly precious by the relentless but fruitless efforts of his enemies to burn and to destroy it. Thus do we see him wandering from country to country, from shore to shore, hated, despised, persecuted, robbed, cheated, with naught but the psalms of David and the songs of other sweet singers in Israel to comfort him, with naught but the faith in the protective power of his God to support him.

As an instrument in the hands of Providence, it is the mission of the Jew to scatter the seeds of monotheism, seeds that could not well be spread by a small nation engaged in the confining occupation of husbandry, but seeds that have been successfully scattered by the people of this same small nation since they have been



dispersed and have become traders and merchants among the nations of the earth.

If we find the world better to-day than it was nineteen hundred years ago, if we now find men more kindly, more humane, more charitable toward one another, if we find women occupying a higher sphere, and the son of toil enjoying his one day's rest out of every seven, to what other agency does the world owe so much for these manifold blessings as to the religion of the Jew and to the great daughters of that religion—Christianity and Mohammedanism?

When we remember that in nineteen hundred years Judaism and its daughters have converted one-third of the people of this earth to the belief in the God of Israel, when we remember that during that comparatively short period over five hundred millions of souls have been redeemed from paganism and rank idolatry, have been lifted from the condition of heartless and bloodthirsty brutes to the standard of God-fearing people, we can begin to realize the blessings that the Jewish conception of an absolute, spiritual God has been to mankind, and we can realize the importance of the mission of the Jew, the importance of the work already by him per-

formed, and the importance of the task yet to be completed.

As a nomad the Jew took the first step in the direction of his mission; as a tiller of the soil he advanced a pace further toward his destiny; but since engaged in commerce, he has made the most important stride in the path of duty for which he is designed.

He must yet continue to push onward and forward, restless and tireless, ever wakeful and watchful, all the while remembering the divine precept of the gentle prophet Hillel, who said, "The essence of Judaism is: whatever is displeasing unto thee—do not unto others."

It seems to have been the hand of destiny that inspired a Russian Jew to write a history of the horrors of war which commanded the attention of the Czar of Russia and prompted him to issue his call to the nations of the world for the universal peace conference held at The Hague.

The Jew must yet continue in his course until the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God shall be universally acknowledged, until the prophecy of Isaiah shall have been fulfilled, and the people of the earth shall have beaten their swords into plowshares, and their spears into

pruning-hooks, until nation shall not lift up sword against nation, and they shall not learn war any more. Then will the mission of the Jew be fulfilled, then will there be but one belief,—the belief in the Absolute, the one and only God.





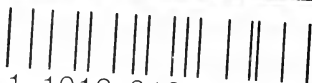








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